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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

STUDENT PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS' NATIONAL COUNCIL  
FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION AND  
CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING DISPOSITIONS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Education, Leadership, Administration, and Policy

by

Kimberly Renee Hudson

October, 2012

Robert R. Barner, Ph.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wonderful family. Especially to my beautiful mother, Corria Thompson and precious daughter, Sydney, I love you very much.

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First, I want to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ because he has directed me and guided me through this entire journey. Without his grace and mercy, I would not have been able to complete this step in my life. *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not unto your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your path (Proverbs 3:5-6).* Thank you for increasing my faith and loving me.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative study is to identify what relationship, if any, exists between (a) teachers' perception of their own moods and behaviors that align with National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's (NCATE) teaching dispositions and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) standards within the classroom and (b) their students' perception of teachers' moods and behaviors that align with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC standards within the classroom. This study focused on students in Grades 9 through 12. This study also examined whether students' academic achievement, as measured by their course grades, affects students' perception of their teachers' in-class moods and behaviors.

The study gathered self-report data about (a) students' perceptions of the teacher's dispositions based on students' observations of teacher behavior in the classroom and (b) teachers' self report about their own dispositions. These dispositions are conceptually equated with teacher attitudes and are based on the NCATE dispositions. The Student Perception Survey created by the researcher was used to gauge the students' perspective of particular dispositions observed within the classroom setting.

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education dispositions state there are certain attitudes and behaviors teachers should use in the classroom, which align with the dispositions measured by the Student Perception Survey. This method was selected to assess the relationship

between (a) the NCATE dispositions as indicated by current observable moods, attitudes, and behaviors as perceived by students, and (b) student grades.

The results of the study suggest that the disposition of belief of a student's ability to learn is being accurately perceived and being displayed by the teachers in the classroom. The findings also suggest that although the students like their teachers, the students perceive that their teacher's treatment as unfair whether it be toward themselves or other students, therefore the disposition of fairness is not being accurately displayed in the classroom. The research shows that there is a relationship between average student's course grades and the teacher's disposition within the classroom.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Most every job requires training. Unfortunately, training is not always readily available in the field of education. Teachers are being chosen from every discipline to come into the classroom. Today teachers can be pulled from different professions without the benefit of learning the importance of child psychology and other training specifically provided for education. Most of these teachers have had no formal training in education or with students. They are unfamiliar with basic information on pedagogy and terms like curriculum, classroom management, cooperative learning, or No Child Left Behind (Kozol, 2007).

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE; 2008) maintains through the enactment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), teachers in rural and urban schools are coming into the classroom underprepared for the students with whom they are coming in contact. Some teachers today are entering classrooms without in-depth content knowledge, poor classroom management strategies, negative attitudes, and minimal skills to stop disruptive behavior. This lack of skill impedes learning and minimizes student achievement (Boynton & Boynton, 2005; Cameron & Sheppard, 2006; Mahon, 2006). Moore (2008) acknowledges that teachers do the best they can with the skills they have, but questions whether their skills are academically effective.

Moore (2008) goes on to point out that research has found that experienced teachers often admit they lack the skills to be effective classroom managers and do not know skills that would motivate student learning. The lack

of effective classroom management skills or appropriate training could contribute to poor student performance and could also prove to affect the students' self esteem. Some teachers often accuse students of not performing because of poor behavior and poor classroom performance oftentimes not considering their role in the process.

Students today face many obstacles and do not have the support that they sometimes need in order to guide them to academic success. Lack of support from home, peer pressure, outside influences including gang activity are just a few challenges that students face when trying to achieve in school (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Cameron & Sheppard, 2006; Moore, 2008; Wong, Wiest, & Cusick, 2002). Children need validation and encouragement in order to reach their highest potential. They often get this validation and encouragement from the teachers, administrators and peers that they come into contact with everyday (Teven, 2007).

Studies have shown that students need parental attachment in order to feel comfortable to explore and master the challenges that they face on a daily basis. The parent's role in the student's life oftentimes makes the difference between student success or failure. Research from Armsden and Greenberg (1987) showed that attachment relationships that children make beyond early childhood serve the purpose of support by providing security for which the young child can explore. However, when there is no support from home, children seek to form attachment relationships and friendships with entities outside of the home. These attachment relationships that children form include teacher and peer relationships that they maintain through their lifetime that help them further



explore their environment. Wong et al. (2002) also found that the attachment relationships become very significant in a student's motivation and academic achievement.

Students need these attachment interactions in order for them to capably explore and experiment. Oftentimes, teachers are the first in a sequence of adult figures students come in contact within an educational setting and their influence on students is very important. Sometimes the teacher or the school is the only stable relationship that the children have in adolescence. Teachers have the job of not only teaching the students, but disciplining and motivating the students to learn. One motivational study provided evidence that students are more expected to be interested in the curriculum and the activities involved if they feel support by the teacher (Wentzel, 1997). Kozol (2007) offers a similar view:

Establishing a chemistry of trust between the children and ourselves is a great deal more important than to charge into the next three chapters of the social studies text or packaged reading system we have been provided: the same one that was used without success by previous instructors and to which the children are anesthetized by now. (p. 2)

Teachers sometimes are not motivated to teach due to inside and outside interferences. Inside of an educational organization, Kozol (2007) lists some general explanations for the slow destruction in teaching: "the systematic crushing of creativity and intellect, the threatened desiccation of personalities, and the degradation of self-respect" (p. 32). Additionally, Baloglu (2009) stated that most teachers are levelheaded, reasonable people who are dedicated and devoted to their jobs. However, many can be ordinary in their aims and

imagination, lack patience, and work with the fear of being seen to fail. Baloğlu also stated that the pressures of everyday work will produce teachers who are cynical and maybe even militant. These types of attitudes may produce a negative effect on the standard of teaching that goes on in the classroom.

The NCATE (2008), founded in 1954, represents community educators and policymakers. In their answer to No Child Left Behind and the shortage of well-prepared teachers, dispositions in teacher education were defined in order to provide a guide by which every teacher should be held accountable. According to the NCATE, these dispositions were created, “to develop rigorous standards for educator preparation and to evaluate institutions according to those standards” (p. 6).

The two primary dispositions that the NCATE (2008) require institutions to use to measure a teacher’s performance: (a) fairness and (b) the belief that all children can learn. While NCATE only lists the two professional dispositions, an addendum states that each organization should base their own professional dispositions on their mission statement and conceptual framework. This means that each state, based upon their own laws, rules, and regulations, should create their own criteria on how an educator should effectively function within the classroom setting.

The success of a student depends on many factors. Researchers agree that difficulty in academics; parent involvement, peer pressure, lack of commitment, and teacher interaction all affect the student’s ability to succeed in education (Jeynes, 2007; Nutt, 2003; Tinto, 2009). Those who are most responsible for disciplining students are the teachers and administrators who see

these students most of the day. A popular belief among administrators, teachers, and parents is that a quality education depends on curriculum content, school programs that support and enrich curricula implementation, and the quality of teaching occurring in classrooms (McCormack, Gore, & Thomas, 2006). The quality of teaching that occurs in the classroom may be hindered by unavoidable circumstances.

The circumstances that can affect the quality of education include working conditions, lack of structure, and lack of support. Kozol (2007) states that the discouragement of educators has little to do with the students and more to do with the crushing of the personal and professional spirit and creative processes when trying to teach. How might teachers maintain their professionalism while feeling unappreciated? Furthermore, how might teachers encourage others when they themselves are not encouraged?

NCATE (2008) defines dispositions as “professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities” (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, Professional Dispositions). Those verbal and non-verbal behaviors, because of the aforementioned reasons, not to mention any personal issues that an educator might have, could possibly be factors that affect quality of teaching or quality education in the classroom (Kozol, 2007). Students may perceive teachers’ verbal and non-verbal behaviors either positively or negatively, which might affect students’ ability to learn. Teachers’ interactions with students, therefore, affect the student’s aptitude to focus on

current issues, such as the concepts they are to learn or their education in general (Wong et al., 2002).

NCATE (2008) made it the responsibility of each state to create additional dispositions based on the states own laws and regulations. Therefore in 1997, California Department of Education, along with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, created the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). The purpose of these standards is to “represent a developmental, holistic view of teaching, and are intended to meet the needs of diverse teachers and students in California” (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing [CCTC], 1997, p. 3). In an effort to help teachers create lifelong professionalism as well as help them develop best practices as educators, these standards are provided to first and second year teachers.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem, therefore, is that educational organizations throughout the United States need to accurately evaluate teachers based on the NCATE dispositions. Furthermore, educational organizations need to determine whether they are utilizing NCATE and state teaching and educational standards effectively in order to create an organization that is fair and driven by student needs. More specifically, organizations need to review the NCATE dispositions for the teaching profession and the effectiveness of those dispositions within the classroom, with the aim of increasing the quality of education for students.

Many studies have been performed to analyze teachers' application of NCATE dispositions within the classroom. Misco (2007) questions whether teachers have forgotten about the dispositions in their quest to prepare students

for higher learning and life. This researcher suggests a framework where students gain dispositional knowledge through educational habits. Jensen (2004) studied how teachers are disposed to their students and reasons behind their love of teaching. However few studies have focused on student perception of teachers' application of NCATE teaching dispositions within the classroom. Clearly, student's perceptions of teachers' behaviors may affect their academic achievement and their affect toward teachers (Baloğlu, 2009; Jeynes, 2007; Kozol, 2007; Wong et al., 2002).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify what relationship, if any, exists between (a) teachers' perception of their own dispositions and behaviors that align with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC standards within the classroom, (b) their students' perception of teachers' dispositions and behaviors that align with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC standards within the classroom at ABC School, and (c) whether students' academic achievement, as measured by their course grades, relates to students' perception of their teachers' in-class dispositions and behaviors. This study focused on students in Grades 9 through 12 at ABC School.

The Teacher Disposition Survey and the Student Perception Survey were created by using wording from two NCATE teaching dispositions, namely, fairness and the belief that every student can learn. Both surveys created by the researcher contain 32 statements that measure fairness and a teacher's belief in their students' ability to achieve. Using the Likert scale, both surveys contain questions about fair treatment, unfair treatment, belief in the students' abilities,

and student-perceived dispositions of the teacher. This self assessment was used to measure both teachers' perceptions and students' perceptions of in-class teacher disposition and behavior. Knowledge gained from this study of student's perception may assist educators in analyzing the effects of their in-class dispositions or behaviors and in creating additional means of assisting teachers in consciously utilizing more effective classroom dispositions and behaviors.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the research for this study:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of their own in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey which aligns with National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) teaching dispositions and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) standards?
2. What are students' perceptions of their teachers' in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Student Perception Survey, which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards?
3. Is there a relationship between (a) teachers' perceptions of their own dispositions as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey and (b) students' perception of their teacher's disposition as measured by the Student Perception Survey?
4. Is there a relationship between average students' course grades and their perceptions of teachers' dispositions as measured by the student grades from ABC School and the Student Perception Survey?

## **Key Terms and Operational Definitions of Variables**

The following definitions will help the reader understand specific terms related to the dissertation topic. This understanding will assist the reader in correctly interpreting the results of the study.

**Application of NCATE's teaching dispositions.** According to the NCATE (2008), professional dispositions are defined as follows:

professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development. NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behaviors in educational settings. (pp. 89-90)

These two dispositions—fairness and the belief that every child can learn—were the primary dispositions assessed. The NCATE (2008) also charged individual organizations to form their own dispositions based on their own observations. For the purpose of this study, the NCATE dispositions were measured by two surveys created by the researcher; these use a Likert scale to gauge how strongly one disagrees or agrees with statements of activities and attitudes of the teacher within the classroom setting.

**California Standards for the Teaching Profession.** The California Commission for Teaching Credentialing (1997) state that the California Standards for the Teaching Profession “reflect an expectation that the education of diverse students is likely to be most productive when teachers use effective

pedagogical principles and practices in all subject areas” (p. 1). There are six standards by which teachers are evaluated:

- Engaging and supporting all students in learning
- Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning
- Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
- Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students
- Assessing student learning
- Developing as a professional educator

**In-class dispositions.** This refers to dispositions exhibited by the teacher within the classroom setting based on the students’ perceptions within the class. Verbal and non-verbal behaviors were surveyed based on terms from the Teacher Disposition Survey and the Student Perception Survey created by the researcher. According to NCATE (2008), there are two main professional dispositions. They are fairness and the belief that all children can learn. For the purpose of this study, the teacher’s self-assessed in-class dispositions and the students’ perceptions of the teachers’ in-class behaviors were surveyed, which are based on these NCATE dispositions. In other words, the study used student observation and perception of teachers’ verbal and non verbal behaviors to determine the intentionality of the dispositions and how they affect student achievement. These dispositions were measured based on the two separate survey tools, which are designed to assess fairness, unfairness, and belief in the students’ abilities. Once approved, the survey was distributed to students and teachers.



**Academic achievement.** This term refers to a student's success in all academic areas. This includes core subject areas such as English and mathematics. For the purpose of this study, academic achievement was measured by a grade point average of an A sustained over a period of time.

**Affect toward teacher.** This term refers to students' feelings about a teacher based on their perception of a disposition observed or not observed within the class. The Student Perception Survey created for this study primarily examined positive and negative occurrences, but also measured feeling. For example, some survey items asked students to indicate whether they feel comfortable to speak in class, whether they feel uncomfortable, and whether they like the teacher.

**Dispositions.** This term is defined for this study as a habit that is exhibited or a goal to be achieved by teachers in order to be considered professional and consistent behaviors. In 1992, the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) categorized common principles in teacher knowledge into three topics: knowledge, dispositions, and performance standards. Terms that are commonly used when describing dispositions are: appreciates, believes, understands, responds, realizes, seeks, has enthusiasm, is committed, show, takes, recognizes, values, makes feel valued, respects, is sensitive to, persists, and adopts. For the purpose of this study, teacher NCATE dispositions were measured by using a survey tool created by the researcher to determine if certain behaviors are consistent.

**Importance of the Study**

The data collected from this study served to improve the teaching profession by reviewing whether or not the NCATE dispositions of (a) fairness and (b) belief that all children can learn, are being displayed within our schools, according to students. This study allowed the teacher to see the importance of the student-teacher relationship and how the student's perceptions of the teacher's actions and attitudes can affect future student achievement, given that a child spends almost 8 hours a day with a teacher.

This study may also help determine if teacher attitudes and behaviors related to fairness and belief in the student's ability to achieve are factors in the student dropout rate. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2006), the most current national dropout rate for students age 16 to 24 is 9.3, which has decreased by 1% from 2005.

**Limitations**

This study was limited to Math and English classes at ABC School. It was also limited by the honesty of the teachers and students to answer questions about the verbal and non-verbal behaviors that they observed and are exhibited within the classroom. This study may also be limited by sample size. The researcher reviewed the California Standards for Teacher Education to discuss the use and effectiveness of the NCATE dispositions, therefore the findings may be generalized only to schools subject to California State Standards or subject to similarly-worded standards by other states. Organizations use the NCATE dispositions to create their own standards based on each state's individual law, rules, and regulations. Therefore, the standards might be different in every state.

Additional studies using other state-created standards may be done to determine if the NCATE dispositions are being displayed within their standards. The data set from this study was collected from the themes on the Teacher Disposition Survey and Student Perception Survey at only one point in time, therefore dispositions exhibited over time will not be observed which is a limitation of this study.

### **Assumptions**

The researcher assumes the following:

1. The verbal and non-verbal behaviors, as indicators of the dispositions to be measured, are the dispositions that are typically observed in every classroom.
2. The verbal and non-verbal behaviors, as indicators of the dispositions to be measured, will have already been observed by students and accurately remembered.
3. The verbal and non-verbal behaviors, as indicators of the dispositions to be measured, have an effect on student achievement and student behavior.
4. Fairness and belief that every child can learn present themselves in the teachers' in-class verbal and non-verbal behaviors in a regular classroom setting.

## **Chapter 2: Review of Literature**

Teacher quality has developed into a key topic of discussion in recent years. After years of (a) low test scores, (b) newsworthy events related to questionable and poor teacher judgment, and (c) an increase in private and charter schools, more emphasis is being placed on teachers and their role in the demise of public education. Empirical evidence suggests there is a considerable relationship between teacher quality and student achievement. The research also indicates that the quality of the teacher is more important to student achievement than any other issues students may face in their educational aspirations (Wenglinsky, 2002).

Educators and researchers have tried to identify representations of teacher quality through various means. Teacher education programs use measurements including GPAs and comparisons of standardized tests such as the SAT, PRAXIS, and intellectual aptitude tests to gauge teacher success. These tests may measure student competence but may not appraise the teacher quality within a classroom setting.

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education requires teacher preparation programs to measure dispositions within their student teachers as they prepare to enter the classroom. Some researchers believe that the dispositions are as critical to teacher quality as are content knowledge and teacher pedagogy (Singh & Stoloff, 2008).

The ability of teachers to respond in a particular manner within the classroom setting has been difficult for teacher education programs to assess. Some researchers agree that the dispositions represent processes, not

pedagogy, and are relational aspects of teaching requiring intense observation by administrators (Osguthorpe, 2008; Shelley, 2006; Thornton, 2006). Shelley (2006) argued that “standardization in teacher education programs has made it difficult for teacher educators and teacher candidates to pay adequate attention to the assessment of moral aspects of practice, such as responsiveness to individual students” (p. 9).

The focus of teacher education programs has been based on pedagogy, knowledge, and skills, not necessarily dispositions. These practices or dispositions are not likely to be observed daily by supervisors or administrators but by are observed by students with whom the teachers are in daily contact. Shelley (2006) further states that “judgments about dispositions are easily questioned and more difficult to defend because they can be seen as being subjective” (p. 3). Therefore, dispositions are often more difficult to measure.

Alfred Mercier, an author in the late 1800s, stated, “What we learn with pleasure we never forget” (QuotationsBook, n.d., para. 1). If this is true, effective education should be fun. It should be challenging, stimulating, and interesting enough that the information being presented by any teacher, no matter the subject, can be retained. Thus dispositions of teachers that are not adequately present or observed in the classroom, especially those related to creating a positive mood and enthusiasm for learning, may affect student learning.

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a discussion of historical data related to student perception of teachers’ quality through the application of the NCATE teaching dispositions. Additionally, this review addresses the Social Cognitive Theory, which provides the theoretical framework for this study. This

theory is that individual knowledge is directly related to observing their surroundings. This literature review has addressed the NCATE teaching dispositions and their effect on quality education for students. This review has attempted to show the connection between the NCATE teaching dispositions and their connection to the state standards. In addition, this chapter includes a review of literature regarding student perception. These topics have provided a foundation for discussion of the importance of teacher effectiveness and quality education as assessed in the present study.

### **The Importance of NCATE Teaching Dispositions**

Before NCATE defined their dispositions, many colleges of education already defined what could be termed *job-related soft skills* (such as promptness, effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills, positive attitude, organization, appropriate professional dress, and ability to work positively with others) on which they would evaluate candidates (Jensen, 2004). These behaviors were to address how educators were to perform their job. Sockett (2009) states that a disposition has three particular characteristics:

First, a disposition is a disposition to act (friendliness), not merely to “be” (closed to experience). Second, a disposition to act implies awareness of what one is doing (e.g., being friendly). Third, acting with awareness implies that a person acts with intention: That is, this specific act is intended as a friendly act. (p. 292)

The NCATE (2008), founded in 1954, represents community educators and policymakers. In their response to No Child Left Behind and the shortage of well prepared teachers, dispositions in teacher education were defined in order to

provide a guide by which every teacher should be held accountable. Damon (2008) states the following:

It is clear from this definition that NCATE intended the term “dispositions” to signify “beliefs and attitudes” that reflect a particular stance towards moral issues large and small from “caring on an interpersonal level to “social justice” on a broader societal scale. (p. 2)

The NCATE (2008) dispositions are defined as “professional attitudes, values, and beliefs that are demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors, such as educators’ interactions with students, families, colleagues, and communities” (pp. 89-90). According to the NCATE, these dispositions were created, “to develop rigorous standards for educator preparation and to evaluate institutions according to those standards” (p. 6).

Those verbal and non-verbal behaviors, not to mention any personal issues that an educator might have, could possibly be factors that contribute to the lack of quality teaching or quality education in the classroom. The students could perceive these verbal and non-verbal behaviors as personal attacks, thereby restricting the student’s ability to focus on the current issues, meaning either the concepts they are there to learn or their education in general.

Professional educators can make an important difference to student learning by thoughts of how they are disposed toward the students, reasons they teach, and curriculum (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE], 2010).

There are two primary professional dispositions that the NCATE (2008) requires all organizations to use to measure a teacher’s performance: (a)

fairness and (b) the belief that all children can learn. While the NCATE only lists the two professional dispositions, an amendment adds that each organization should base its own professional dispositions on their mission statement and conceptual framework. The California Commission on Teacher Education standards as well as other States educational organization standards is based on the NCATE dispositions for the creation of their own teacher evaluation processes.

Dispositions, in general, mean how teachers are inclined toward students, the curriculum, and the reason they teach. The way teachers educate, the curriculum that is taught, and the reasons the teachers teach, may affect the students' success. From review of the literature, studies show that student academic success is dependent not only on the students' ability but may also depend on parent involvement, difficulty of academics, lack of commitment, and teacher interaction in an educational setting (Jeynes, 2007).

One study conducted by Thornton (2006) describes dispositions and teacher quality. According to Thornton, within teacher preparation programs and discussions of teacher quality, knowledge and skills are essential elements; however, "dispositions remain neglected in teacher education" (p. 53). When describing dispositions and their role in teacher education, the researcher explains that the foundations of dispositions began in the studies of philosophy and psychology, where dispositions are the difference between thought and judgment. According to Ritchhart (2001), dispositions take a place between our emotions and our abilities in teacher performance and those actions which we are disposed toward.



Another concept surrounding dispositions is that they are directly related to teachers' actions and behaviors in a school setting (Thornton, 2006). The exhibited behaviors include (a) modeling positive actions and (b) positive marks on rubrics and rating scales that measure state teaching standards and national standards for expectations of beginning teachers. Thornton (2006) states that the language for which these behaviors are expressed "looks more like pedagogical practices or teaching behaviors than dispositions" (p. 55). The researcher also states that because teacher education programs are replacing the terms *value*, *belief*, or *committed* when discussing competencies and expectations of teachers, the dispositions appear to be expected teaching behaviors and pedagogical practices.

Teaching professional behaviors such as "attendance, work ethic, preparation, punctuality, sense of humor, and appropriate dress" (Thornton, 2006, p. 55) are another view of how dispositions should be defined. Sockett (2009) describes dispositions as personality traits that are intentional and reflective:

First, without the manifestation of a disposition being intentional, it is difficult to see how effectively a teacher could undertake sustained reflection on his or her (intentional or unintentional) teaching actions and/or their intended or unintended consequences. For the reflection must in part be on the way in which the teaching acts actually did manifest the disposition. (p. 298)

A 3-year study conducted by Thornton (2006) gathered 16 teachers defined as high quality teachers and 120 students from an urban area. All

teachers received training and participated in two professional development and preparation classes focused on curriculum development and assessment measures. The teachers planned during the summer sessions, created common curriculum, discussed common pedagogy, and formulated their own belief statement about teaching and learning. Thornton's research question addressed the removal of limitations so that highly qualified teachers are allowed and empowered to use best practices, to illuminate "what can we learn about teacher dispositions" (p. 58). The researcher conducted purposeful interviews and classroom observation of the participants using guiding questions. The students were also questioned about their experiences with the 16 teachers participating in the study. Results of the student interviews revealed that students felt more comfortable to express themselves. They felt the teachers "helped them more, talked to them more, let them work together, and trusted them to make decisions" (Thornton, 2006, p. 60). The students felt the teachers were not always watching them or directing them on how to perform; as a result, the student participants thought they learned more from the teachers.

The results of the teacher interviews showed that the teachers who participated in the study articulated the original goals of the group of educators who planned for the summer session. Those teachers who complied with the plans were the teachers that the students mentioned when the researcher interviewed them. It was also noted that teachers who continued to work as they usually did "were those who were identified as less effective in the student and pre-service teacher interviews" (Thornton, 2006, p. 61).

Thornton (2006) set forth to define and identify technical and responsive dispositions in action by showing the differences among the way the teachers practiced. Thornton created the following definition:

Dispositions are habits of mind, including both cognitive and affective attributes, that (a) filter one's knowledge, skills, and beliefs and (b) impact the action one takes in classroom or professional setting. They are manifested within relationships, as meaning-making occurs with others, and they are evidenced through interactions in the form of discourse. (p. 62)

Sockett (2009) and Thornton (2006) state that dispositions are developed in action with awareness and intent. "Reflection on such actions is based on the intentionality of those acts, and judgment is always necessary" (Sockett, 2009, p. 295). Therefore, another way to describe the focus of this study is that it intends to use student observation and perception to determine the intentionality of the dispositions and how they affect student achievement.

### **Student Perception**

According to the literature, NCATE dispositions are defined as verbal and non-verbal communications that should be exhibited by the teacher in the classroom and that impact the perceptions students have regarding the teacher, the classroom, and education overall. These verbal and non-verbal behaviors affects the way students perform because of the perceived importance of their own abilities, the students' roles in the classroom, and students' responses toward the teacher's behaviors or NCATE dispositions. Observing the students' perceptions toward these dispositions is a vital step in determining what affects

their academic performance and how successful the students will be within the academic setting.

**Self-efficacy.** A student's perception of education is largely based on a student's sense of self efficacy. A common definition of self efficacy has been perceiving one's own abilities to achieve or successfully complete assigned tasks. Wise (2007) states that self efficacy is situation-specific and can predict behavior by showing that people who are highly efficacious perform better when faced with difficult tasks than those who have weak self efficacy and do not have confidence in their abilities to perform. A student's self efficacy is dependent on a whole school approach that takes into consideration the emotional impact of teacher attributes and behaviors.

Wise (2007) tested the self efficacy theory and how students escalate in belief in their personal characteristics toward recreation activities. In this study, the researcher used the knowledge-and-appraisal personality architecture (KAPA), which differentiates social-cognitive variables using two separate criteria: (a) structures that are knowledge-based and (b) assessment processes. This study was conducted in 2005 with 104 undergraduate students who attended a Midwestern university. Wise focused on three variables: self, situational schemas, and self efficacy. Older versions of the KAPA test used the terminology *relevant* and *not relevant*, terms used by Wise, while Cervone (2007) did not favor these terms because he believed that all strengths were relevant although they either helped or hindered performance. While Wise used a different scale to test self efficacy, Cervone suggested that strengths can be viewed as a hindrance, while some may view weaknesses as a help. Therefore,

Cervone, with his colleagues, created a different scale that helped the individuals to state whether their personal attributes were a help or hindrance.

The results from Wise's (2007) study showed that individuals believed at least one attribute would aid in performance and some attributes would impede performance. Additionally, those activities that could not be labeled *help* or *hinder* were assigned a *mixed* code. The results also showed that perceptions toward strong personal attributes were shown to help one's performance when performing recreation activities. Wise determined that there was strong self efficacy present when personal characteristics helped performance, whereas weak self efficacy was present when personal characteristics hindered performance. Wise believed that his work could lead to interventions that may strengthen one's personal self efficacy. Through this research, it is seen that individuals who had perceptions of strong efficacy believe they have the qualities required to perform successfully, whereas those who had weak self efficacy believed their personal qualities were liabilities.

Mitchell, Bradshaw, and Leaf (2010) determined that students faced individual-level, school-level, and classroom-level factors within a school environment that may affect self efficacy and student perception. Factors outside of the school environment may include gender, ethnicity, age, parent involvement, crime, violence, and community disorder. Within a school environment the factors that may affect perception include faculty turnover rate, high classroom student-teacher ratio, inconsistent rule implementation, acceptance or non acceptance by classmates, and bullying. Thus, according to

the literature a review of what the students are disposed to inside and outside of an educational setting are factors that would affect student achievement.

### **Student Perception of Education**

Studies have shown that a young learner's ability to achieve in school is not only dependent on the teachers' ability to perform but also other factors that may help or hinder student achievement (Totura et al., 2009). In Totura et al.'s *Bullying and Victimization Among Boys and Girls in Middle School*, the researchers describe the home and school environment and the context that students perceive when exhibiting bullying behaviors or victim behaviors. For this study, 20 to 30 students completed student surveys that addressed internalizing and externalizing behaviors in relation to students' home life and the school environment.

The research showed that students who possessed support from family and school staff engaged in fewer problems in peer relationships because they were more focused on their academics, whereas those students who experienced a disruptive school environment or perceived a lack of support from home or school staff were more likely to be the aggressor than the one victimized.

It is expected that students with internalizing and externalizing difficulties would be at particular risk for marginalization and negative peer relations if they report coming from families and school environments that exhibit supportive characteristics to a lesser extent or are disengaged from classroom activities, as evidenced by poor academic performance.

(Totura et al., 2009, p. 578)

Way, Reddy, and Rhodes (2007) examined the amount of change in student perception of school climate in middle school from sixth to eighth grade. They noted four main factors that affected the student perception, which eventually affected the student's emotional and psychological behavior:

(a) the nature of relationships between teacher and students; (b) the nature of relationships between students; (c) the extent to which student autonomy is allowed in the decision making process; and (d) the extent to which the school provides clear, consistent, and fair rules and regulations. (p. 195)

The data used was from an ongoing longitudinal study involving 2,860 students of different socioeconomic backgrounds from middle school located across the state. The study was a part of a statewide assessment and not tied to any particular intervention program. A majority of students who were sampled or "retained" in the study were more likely to be White, female, and come from families with two educated parents. One school had to be eliminated from this study as a result of a high number of students dropping out of the study; this school had a higher population of African American students with lower socioeconomic status.

Way et al. (2007) discovered that during the sixth grade, students showed optimistic sensitivity toward teachers and peers; however, as the student's moves through middle school, their ideas changed for every year thereafter. For these students, teacher and peer support decreased. Gender specific and socioeconomic status was also observed. Initially, girls perceived teacher support to be positive but gradually experienced decreased support as they

matriculated through middle school. Also, girls experienced less peer support more than boys as time changed. A change in students' perceptions of progressive teacher support was coupled with amplified depression warning signs and behavior issues (Way et al., 2007). Students do not always have or perceive the support that they sometimes need in order to guide them to academic success.

Evidence has also shown that parent involvement is important when discussing student perception. Wong et al. (2002) found that positive parent attachments aid in less physical and social anxiety, positive transitions, and provide emotional security. Additionally, their research showed that higher-attachment relationships resulted in "greater attention-participation, decreased insecurity about the self, and a higher grade point average" (p. 257). Academic performance tasks that are to be performed within the classroom may be hindered by lack of support from home, peer pressure, self esteem issues, and other issues that students face when trying to achieve in school. "Because teachers are the primary adult figures within the academic setting, their impact on students is also important" (Wong et al., 2002, p. 257).

Attachment relationships that children form include teacher relationships as well as peer relationships that they might maintain through their lifetime and that help them further explore their environment. Wong et al. (2002) noted the importance and relevance of the student-to-teacher relationship and how important it is to student academic achievement and motivation. Their research showed that when students perceived support from teachers, they achieved. Students felt support, showed academic effort, and were more likely to show



interest in classroom activities. When there is a strong student-to-teacher relationship, the student shows progress for years to come. Conversely, the lack of teacher support resulted in negative student perception, negative attitude, and lack of interest toward learning.

Social support is the start of the student's perception of their educational environment. Walker, Foote, and Greene (2009) reported when students are comfortable in a setting, they feel included and are more likely to focus on the learning process and their abilities that make that understanding possible. Walker et al. also suggests that a teacher whose goal is to help a student achieve would experience growth by evaluating their classroom environment. A teacher evaluating their own environment, and then making changes based on their evaluation might find that the student's perception as well as behavior may change as result of those evaluated changes. This would encourage a sense of belonging for the students.

The importance of student-to-teacher attachment is also revealed when student transitions from elementary to middle school. Wong et al. (2002) observed that students' perceptions changed exiting elementary school and entering junior high school. The students observed their teachers to be more controlling, less encouraging, and more focused on grades than on the student themselves. The perception of the students' self efficacy changed as well because the situation changed.

### **Student Perception and Motivation**

Review of the literature regarding the reasons for student motivation and academic achievement has centered around several areas, including self efficacy

(Wise, 2007), family influences based on culture, parental behaviors, and beliefs (Urdan, Solek, & Schoenfelder, 2007); gender (Marsh, Martin, & Cheng, 2008); levels of parental involvement (Levpuscek & Zupancic, 2009); and teacher-student relationships (Murdock, Alderman, & Hodge, 2000). When trying to assess student motivation, researchers have looked at student data and standards-based achievement levels. Meyer, McClure, Walkey, Weir, and McKenzie (2009) stated that a student's academic achievement and success is a reflection of student motivation as well as innovative curriculum and assessments.

Student motivation has been observed from elementary to college level students. In a study conducted by Levpuscek and Zupancic (2009), the researchers sought to address the roles of parents and teachers and how they affect the student's motivation to achieve in mathematics. The researchers described parent pressures, teacher support, and academic support as some of the reasons for student motivation. In their study, Levpuscek and Zupancic addressed student motivations that may affect math achievement.

The participants in this study consisted of 365 eighth grade students from 13 different locations. The sample participants were from rural and urban areas and selected randomly. The findings of the study suggest that academic help as well as support and pressure from teachers and parents contributed to the students' self efficacy and mastery of curricular objectives. Levpuscek and Zupanicic (2009) also discovered through their results that additional support from parents and teachers play a crucial role in the student's perceptions of goal achievement, educational competence, and actual academic presentation.

Marsh et al. (2008) addressed student motivation from the perspective of gender. Their study was based on classroom motivation and school climate while addressing whether a male teacher was better for male students than a female teacher. The researchers discussed whether male students are more motivated by male teachers; in other words, they discussed the matching hypothesis, which states that there are positive outcomes when the student's gender and teacher's gender match and negative outcomes when the genders do not match. This issue was also addressed by Hyde (2005) in the gender similarities hypothesis. Marsh et al. also sought to review these hypotheses as well as review classroom climate, teacher effects, and interaction effects, to develop new perspectives to test whether male students were better motivated by male teachers. The study suggests that student motivations and climate were found to be distinguished between student level, class level, and teacher level.

Using the Motivational and Engagement Scale (MES) Marsh et al. (2008) sampled 964 high school students who were in 8<sup>th</sup> grade or 10<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics, English, or science classes from Australian coeducational government schools. This survey administered by 62 teachers included a total of 101 classrooms. The first analysis of the data neither provided support for the gender similarities hypothesis nor the corresponding premise that states that young males are more motivated by male teachers. Additional review of the data showed that the student's self efficacy was not dependent on the teacher, classroom, or the students who were grouped in certain classes. The data set was also able to confirm that "there was little or no support for these predictions" (Marsh et al., 2008, p. 91). There was no evidence supporting the matching

hypothesis, which is that, “male teachers should be better able to motivate boys in particular, whereas female teachers should also be better able to motivate girls” (p. 91). The authors also warn that, “overinflated interpretations of small gender differences can do much harm and lead to counterproductive policies” (p. 79).

The researchers were able demonstrate the importance of class climate as it relates to student motivation and achievement. Class climate was shown to be more affected by the collection of students within the classroom than the teacher who was teaching the class. While Marsh et al. (2008) addressed gender and student motivation, Murdock et al. (2000) presented information on transition from middle school to high school and how this transition affects motivation and behavior. This study was an extension of a previous longitudinal study that examined seventh grade and ninth grade students’ perceptions and motivations surrounding their teachers, peers, and economic utility. Participants in this study were 35% African American and 60% Caucasian “from families whose socioeconomic status ranged from lower income through upper middle-class professional” (p. 331). Data from this study was taken from students, teachers, and district records. Addressing the problems of student transitions from middle to high school, the researchers identified issues such as lower self esteem as well as decline of academic interest and endeavors as reasons for decline in motivation.

In addition to these studies, the Murdock et al. (2000) addressed studies that discussed the perception and importance of economic values. One such study observed the perception of African American students’ ideas regarding

money and education. Some African American students from lower income households made statements that education does not equal financial gain and that school was not the only means to achieve financial success. However, Caucasian students from middle class homes viewed school and financial success differently. "Thus, we included students' perceptions of the economic value of educational success as a third motivational context that may influence their individual expectations and valuing of schooling" (Murdock et al., 2000, p. 331).

Looking at stability and change in motivation over time, three MANOVA analyses were performed to predict motivations of students in seventh grade and how these relate to motivations of students in ninth grade. The analyses used three different variables: teacher support, peer support, and the economic value placed on education by the students. The results supported the original longitudinal study, which determined that there was a relationship between student perception and motivation. While examining these different motivational variables, Murdock et al.'s (2000) findings suggest the values and expectations communicated to the students by teachers and parents made a more positive impact during the student's transition to high school. The researchers noted improvement and increase in students' academic self concepts and decrease in disciplinary referrals. The data also showed that students formed relationships with peers who had similar academic values and goals as their own, which helped improve their motivations toward the students' transitions through high school.

Murdock et al.'s (2000) research also sought to address how alienation from peers affects students' motivation over time. From the data, they determined that African American and Caucasian students' lack of motivation to continue their high school education was based on larger views of (a) economics and (b) the nature of their lives once they leave high school. The literature and research showed African American students were not as motivated as their Caucasian counterparts because of their perception of academics, family, school, and teacher support.

### **Student Perception and Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement means that a parent or guardian is actively participating in activities that involve a child. Since children may spend most of their time with a parent or guardian, the authoritative figure may provide important positive or negative influences. Urdan et al. (2007) state that (a) most children spend most of their young lives with their parents and (b) parents are the most interested or invested in the child's education and future. Therefore, investment in a child's education would include active participation by parents in decisions that might influence child to achieve. Research suggests that family influence is important for reading achievement (Jeynes, 2005), student's sports involvement (Turman, 2007), creativity (Kemple & Nissenberg, 2000), and academic motivation (Urdan et al., 2007). Evidence also suggests that parent involvement encourages a student's self-esteem, positive attitude, and that a positive parent-child relationship serves the teacher's needs, according to Urdan et al. In addition, parental involvement helps a child cope with transitions from home to school and from one school to another school.

Urdan et al. (2007) examined the affect of family influences on 47 high school seniors to see how family influence affects the students' motivation and academic achievement. Using a qualitative study that was conducted 2 years earlier, the researchers asked questions that resulted in four common themes. The four common themes that influenced student motivation were, "family obligation, family pleasing, family support, aversive influence" (Urdan et al., 2007, p. 7). The research addressed cultural factors, the levels of parental involvement, and the effect of parent beliefs on student perception and motivation.

Urdan et al. (2007) reported that parent influences differed among cultures and ethnic groups. Their research showed that Caucasian students tended to do better with a less authoritative figure where as Asian students tended to do better with an authoritative parent figure. Additionally, students felt a sense of purpose and obligation to succeed for parents whose struggles they viewed as a part of their immigration to a new country. Reviewing the data surrounding parental expectations and beliefs, Urdan et al. established that parents who have high expectations and high perception of their child's academic abilities frequently have children who have high expectations for themselves and higher achievement levels. Conversely, they found that a parent's apprehension regarding failure often influences a child negatively. That apprehension and fear is sometimes transferred to the child and may be reflected in the child's academic abilities. The findings from Urdan et al. suggest that not only were students motivated by the need to please their families, but also to disprove negative beliefs of those family members who were not supportive of their

education. The data set also suggests that higher achieving students often addressed cultural factors that affected their self perception and motivation. Those students were often second or third generation immigrants and often mentioned their traditional cultural norms. Finally, the study addressed the many levels of family support or lack of support and how they may affect student's motivation and self perception in regards to student success.

Carlisle, Stanley, and Kemple (2005) found that parent involvement in a young child's education experience eases the change from home to the school and allows the child to see school as a connection to their familiar surroundings. In trying to understand the importance of the family in a child's education, Carlisle et al. described several factors that were associated with family involvement. These factors were family ethnicity, parent's prior educational experience, family structure, work schedule, and social networks. Additionally Hoffman, Llagas, and Snyder (2003) listed family income level as a factor of parental involvement.

According to the evidence, family ethnicity plays a major role in how involved a parent is in a school or in a child's educational experience (Carlisle et al., 2005; Marschall, 2006). How a parent relates to the teacher may be related to the parent's or the teacher's ethnic makeup as well.

Marschall (2006) conducted a study regarding the effects of parental involvement in Latino students and how it affects their educational outcomes in an urban setting. The idea from the researcher's concept showed that representation in a governance committee by a parent encourages parent involvement. In turn, parent involvement may increase student achievement and school outcomes. Using a data set from Chicago public schools, which was



gathered by the National Association of Latino Officials, one researcher addressed three questions:

(a) What are schools doing to support parents, foster involvement and engagement in their children's schools, and generally create strong parent- school relations? (b) How effective are schools at fostering parent involvement? And (c) Do schools with more effective school organization, parent involvement practices, and greater parent participation perform at higher levels than those with less effective practices and lower levels of parent involvement? (Marschall, 2006, p. 1054)

In the discussion, Marschall addressed immigration and demographic changes that school districts are often unprepared for as well as the limited knowledge of teachers who might address this population. The challenges and barriers that the Latino population might experience when dealing with a school and with a new culture include language barriers, immigration problems, and poverty. These issues are often compounded when dealing with the educational system, trying to be involved, and making sure that their child is properly served. Additionally, these schools districts are often not equipped or accustomed to serve them (Marschall, 2006).

The research showed that parents of Latino students had different perceptions and expectations than the parents in the ethnic majority regarding the teacher's role and the parent's role in education. As a result, the teachers may misinterpret the parent's intentions or lack of involvement. Historically, within the Latino culture, the parent's role is to be a nurturer, instilling values and morals, while the teacher's main responsibility is academics. However, with the

role of the traditional family changing, so is the role of the teacher. In her study, Marschall (2006) showed that Latino parents viewed their responsibility as tending to the moral development of children, and they are uncertain about how far to be involved within the school setting. Using demographics, school characteristics, student performance, and teacher responses as the main variables, the results from this study showed that in large schools there was a relationship between strong, positive teacher awareness of the need for parent involvement and strong school efforts to promote positive parent involvement. Parent involvement in the school was also influenced by attendance rates and socioeconomic status of the parents. The results also showed that Latino parent involvement resulted in greater impact in a student's math performance achievement than in reading. The results showed a negative effect of parent involvement in regards to reading; for reading, more parental involvement resulted in lower performance levels. This unexpected result may indicate that with parents more involved in reading, they emphasized their own culture and language, thus detracting from English language learning, although some multicultural studies experts insist that this early focus on the written word of the child's primary language ultimately enhances second language acquisition (M. Castaneda, personal communication, November, 8, 2010). Through this study, Marschall (2006) explained that the lack of parental involvement was often due to cultural barriers and lack of cooperation from schools and that there is a need to establish practices to encourage greater parent-school relationships.

While Marschall (2006) established that culture was a factor in parent involvement and student achievement, Jeynes (2005) found to best forecast a

student's future achievement view the family structure and parent involvement in school issues and functions. Addressing the issue of the family structure in regards to student achievement is becoming a greater area of research due to the changing dynamics. According to Videon (2005), previous research has been primarily focused on two-parent homes and researchers have long overlooked those families headed by single-mothers or single-fathers and how these students' academic achievement might be affected. One such study by Lee, Kushner, and Cho (2007) researched the effect of a parent's gender on parent involvement and student achievement.

Research confirms that students with both parents present typically outperform those students from single parent families in areas such as grades, standardized tests, and evaluations (Lee et al., 2007). The researchers found that little has been done on the achievement level of students who come from a single mother head of household versus single father head of household. However, studies by Featherman and Hauser (1978) and Mulkey, Crain, and Harrington (1992) determined students of single parent homes had lower academic achievement levels than those students that came from an intact family.

Lee et al. (2007) used an educational longitudinal study from the National Center for Educational Statistics to look at student academic performance from parents, students, teachers, and student records. Participants were randomly selected using 10th graders whose data set was completed on the research variables, which were parental involvement, single parent status, socioeconomic status, English and math teachers' evaluations, and standardized math and

reading test scores. Using a three-way MANCOVA, the researchers investigated the interactions and effects of the gender of the parent, child and parental involvement in school, and how it may affect student academic achievement. The results indicated that there was no difference between the academic achievements of students in single-mother or single-father households.

These results were inconsistent with the research by Featherman and Hauser (1978) and Mulkey et al. (1992). Additionally, the results indicated that single mother parents with girls achieved a lower level of academic achievement than single father parents with boys. Single parent fathers with girls, however, scored higher in academic achievement when the father was involved in the child's school activities. Lee et al. (2007) found that there was a relationship between the, parental involvement, family structure, and academic success of students.

Little research has been conducted on parent educational level and how it may affect student achievement. One study that did address parent educational levels was by Bacete and Badenes (2003). The researchers performed a follow-up study on research by Marjoribanks (2001) that addressed the relationships between family social status, parental involvement, cultural relevance of the parent, student intellectual ability, and specific measures of academic achievement. In this study, 150 seventh graders were included, both males and females. Results showed several differences from the study previously conducted by Marjoribanks. The study determined the parents' educational level and parents' cultural level was a major indicator when addressing student achievement.

## **Student Perception and School Climate**

Studies performed on school climate have yielded results that an encouraging school climate is important for academic success and teacher effectiveness. School climate has been defined as “the shared beliefs, values, and attitudes that shape interactions between the students, teachers, and administrators” (Mitchell et al., 2010, p. 272), a place where interpersonal interactions that occur with the school community influence students’ development, cognitively, socially, and psychologically (Hoffman, Hutchinson, & Reiss, 2009), “a setting which young people can learn a sense of membership in and obligation to a group” (Syvertsen, Flanagan, & Stout, 2009, p. 220) and as “the feelings that students and staff have about the school environment over a period of time” (Skiba & Peterson, 1999, p. 122). Hoffman et al. (2009) state that “the school family becomes the internal motivation system where students feel cared for in a safe environment of unconditional acceptance and where they experience the pleasure of helping others” (p. 15).

Mitchell et al. (2010) conducted a study to address student and teacher perception regarding school climate and how the school climate may affect student achievement, as school improvement initiatives are often a result of reviews of school climate and academic achievement. The data set used for this study was collected from 37 mostly suburban Maryland public schools that participated in school improvement and reform initiatives. Teachers were voluntarily surveyed on their perceptions of the school climate. Students were surveyed by experienced employees who explained the study purpose before administering the surveys. The researchers examined a data set from 1881 fifth

graders, including their teachers' perceptions. They placed emphasis particularly on the overall school climate and academics. Mitchell et al. (2010) reviewed variables that may influence a school's disorder, which may indicate a negative, unsupportive, or unstable environment. Those indicators within the school that contribute to a negative perception include large student-teacher ratios, lack of effective discipline policy, or high administrative turnover.

Additionally, the researchers reviewed those factors outside of the school that may also affect school climate. Those factors include "poverty, racial and ethnic heterogeneity, and resident mobility" (Mitchell et al., 2010, p. 272) which influence the level of "crime, violence, and community disorder" (p. 272). Inside of a classroom, indicators such as classroom management issues and an increase of student behavior problems may also affect the school climate. A teacher's perception of these entities may be different than perceptions of a student. The individual factors addressed by the researchers included ethnicity, age, and gender, which may contribute to the school climate.

The results of their study suggested that student and teacher perceptions may vary according to the social-cognitive theory.

Social-cognitive theory suggests that although students and their teachers share a common objective experience regarding school climate, they used a multi-level approach addressing school factors, classroom factors, and individual factors that may affect teacher and student perception. (Mitchell et al., 2010, p. 271)

The same study found that "with regard to elementary school teachers, being male or an ethnic minority has been linked with less favorable perceptions

of the school environment” (Mitchell et al., 2010, p. 272). The research suggests the student and teacher perceptions have an effect on individual factors. The results from this study indicate that teacher’s perception was greater in the areas of school-level factors and classroom-level factors.

While we expected that classroom factors would have more influence on student’s perceptions of climate, due to closer proximity of classroom policies to students’ daily routines, we found that school-level factors such as student mobility, student-faculty ratio, and a change in principal had more influence than classroom factors. (Mitchell et al., 2010, p. 272)

The data set suggested that student perception was influenced more by school-level factors than classroom-level factors. Teachers also reported student participation and greater encouragement from other teachers than did the students. Furthermore, students held a less positive view of the climate than the teachers.

Teachers may feel more positively toward the environment since they may have greater control over their daily activities and the order in which they engage in their daily tasks, while students may hold less favorable views of the climate as they have less power in deciding the order in which tasks are accomplished. Therefore, having a more passive role in the school environment may lead to less favorable perceptions of the school climate. (Mitchell et al., 2010, p. 277)

Overall, the findings of the study by Mitchell et al. (2010) demonstrated the importance of teacher perception and student perception in relationship to student climate, particularly when addressing school improvement initiatives.

Syvvertsen et al. (2009) also addressed the importance of student perception of school climate when adverse situations arise among peers. This study was conducted by giving a theoretical situation on a classmate's plan to perform a perilous act in school. The researchers based their study on actual events that have occurred within a school setting. The concern that the researchers addressed was how school climate may affect peer involvement surrounding a dangerous act, perception of support for the authoritative structure, school solidarity, the community's role in the dangerous situation, and personal feelings. Surveys were distributed to multiple school districts in a Midwestern city where 7th through 12th grade students took the survey for 45 minutes in a social studies class. A total of 1,933 students completed the survey, which was a self assessment of 20 items addressing issues relating to the likelihood of overlooking a classmate threatening a terrifying situation.

The findings demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between students directly intervening or talking to an adult. Additionally, the results showed that "these actions were moderately inversely related to ignoring a peer's dangerous plan" (Syvvertsen et al., 2009, p. 225). The researchers explain that the idea of not telling an adult may be showing the culture of the school and how students handle their own situations by talking amongst themselves and ignoring the threats of the peer. Furthermore, addressing the dangerous issue with a teacher would be viewed as negative and result in the student getting in trouble.

Syvvertsen et al. (2009) continued that students who thought positively of adult authority figures would indeed intervene and speak to the adult if they felt a



peer was planning something dangerous. There was not a significant relationship between school solidarity, feelings of belonging, and telling a friend rather than an authoritative figure. The research showed that middle school levels were more personal and student focused, whereas the high school level showed the students to be more focused on academics and therefore also less willing to intervene in a dangerous situation.

The final results show that school climate and relationships have an important role in preventing dangerous situations. This study showed the importance of school climate in the educational setting:

Taken together, these findings demonstrate the association between perceiving the school climate as democratic and cohesive and students' motivation to speak up and take action when their safety and the safety of their classmates and their teachers might be compromised. (Syvertsen et al., 2009, p. 228)

Another study on school climate was conducted by Hoffman et al. (2009), which addressed the discipline program that was “designed to help teachers enhance social and emotional skills of children and thus enhance the overall school climate” (p. 17). The authors reviewed prior research and found that there were several components that created a healthy school climate:

15 key components of a healthy, supportive school climate [include] achievement motivation, collaborative decision making, equity and fairness, general school climate, order and discipline, parent involvement, school-community relations, staff dedication to student learning, staff expectations, leadership, school building, sharing of resources, caring and

sensitivity, student interpersonal relations and student-teacher relations.

(p. 14)

Hoffman et al. (2009) surveyed 200 K-6th grade teachers from Florida area primary schools and early childhood centers who registered voluntarily into the Conscious Discipline Workshops. Four skilled educators who presented specific skill sets at several monthly conferences conducted the workshops. The results showed the teachers began to practice the skills that they were learning in the workshops in order to deal with behavior issues and focus on learning experiences of the students. “They build positive relationships with their students and sense that they are positively affecting student achievement” (p. 21), thereby improving the school climate. The results showed that one group’s perception of socializing “provided an improvement in school climate” (p. 21) and the second cluster received most of the training “perceived a smaller but still significant benefit in improving in school climate and a larger improvement in skills associated with emotional intelligence” (p. 21). The review of the literature demonstrates that student and teacher perception is important in building a healthy school climate.

### **Student Perception and Community Involvement**

There have not been many studies of students’ perception of their community; however, there are studies that address the importance of the community in an educational setting. Several studies link positive school climate with outside community factors. Mitchell et al. (2010) discuss the social disorganization theory, which addresses racial and ethnic heterogeneity, poverty, and resident mobility. Such community factors affect violence, crime levels, and

disorder in the community. The researchers found in studying the theory that these factors were often related to the school climate.

Rule and Kyle (2009) describe the importance of building a community support system for students to be successful. This study purpose was not only to encourage parent involvement through community building but through building the community of support. This improves faculty interaction, fosters collaborative classrooms, and moves towards more open parent-to-teacher communication, which may yield positive results. Most studies addressing community focus on parental involvement; however, increased involvement by members of the community may be important and have benefits similar to the benefits of parent involvement (Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

### **Teacher Effectiveness and NCATE Dispositions**

There are many definitions today of a good teacher. Bunting (2006) claims that a good teacher “draws students into thoughtful committed spaces where education takes root” (p. 245). Osguthorpe (2008) states, “If there is a truism in education, it is that good teaching requires a teacher to be knowledgeable in content, skilled in method, and virtuous in disposition and character” (p. 288). C. Helms (2006) asked, “Is it possible to identify who are predisposed to become good teachers?” (p. 117). In order to dissect teacher classroom behavior, several characteristics surrounding teaching and education were examined: the perceived reasons for becoming a teacher, teacher education, virtues, morals, and beliefs.

Akiyama (2009) researched pre-service teachers’ beliefs and practices regarding good teaching. This study involved six pre-service teachers who were

enrolled in graduate level courses in New York City. The researcher looked at what influenced their beliefs of good teaching and the challenges they faced when trying to demonstrate their beliefs about good teaching. When discussing teacher beliefs, the research showed that teacher education begins with the personal beliefs and past experiences of the individual, which shape ideas and perceptions. Akiyama (2009) also discovered that teachers start their educational careers with preconceived notions about how teaching works based on observations; however, once entering the classroom these beliefs, though persistent, may change. These beliefs and ideas may affect the way teacher educators train new teachers in instructional strategies and classroom management.

Osguthorpe (2008) addressed how educational programs should not only teach skills but should also be in line with what is “good, right, and virtuous” (p. 288). The researcher states that it is readily accepted by most educators that an understanding of subject matter and content will help students achieve, but moral character extends beyond learning by influencing the moral character of the students they have been assigned. Additionally, Osguthorpe recommends that dispositions for teacher education programs include moral character development, as there is a relationship, and the dispositions may be the best way to assess a teacher’s character and growth. “In context of the teacher preparation, it would likely be difficult to find a teacher education program that did not place good moral character and dispositions (or some derivative) as a high priority for its teacher candidates” (Osguthorpe, 2008, p. 290).

Using the Manner in Teaching Project (MTP), Osguthorpe's (2008) focus was to understand how moral character is expressed in the classroom. The purpose of the project was to address moral character traits such as honesty, responsibility, caring, kindness, and fairness as well as understand what traits were considered undesirable. Osguthorpe states the following:

If we make the assumption that there is a relationship between the moral dispositions of a teacher and the moral development of a student, then we want teachers of good disposition and moral character for at least three reasons. The first reason is that we want students of good disposition and moral character. . . . The second reason is that we want teachers to both consciously and unconsciously convey good dispositions and moral character. . . . The third reason is that we want teachers to teach morality programmatically. (p. 292).

Teaching morality programmatically would mean that each standard, objective, or lesson being presented to a student would be thought out, careful, and presented with the purpose of making an impact. Osguthorpe believes teachers should consciously and unconsciously convey morality as well as "effectively provide moral instruction via curricula" (p. 293).

### **Negative Behaviors**

Baloğlu (2009) conducted a qualitative study on negative behaviors of teachers in the classroom on a high school level. His research showed that in many classrooms, student misbehavior was common. The most frequently cited problem that occurs in public schools is that educators reevaluate their roles in light of this negative classroom behavior by the students. Additionally, he noted

that negative classroom behavior by the student contributes to the stress and discontent felt by the teacher, ultimately affecting the teachers' ability to adequately perform their duties.

"Teachers' primary responsibility is to help students learn in the classroom" (Baloğlu, 2009, p. 71), but it is not the only responsibility. Today, students may go to school with a myriad of issues that the teacher may or may not be aware of. Baloğlu (2009) noted that behaviors exhibited by students may manifest themselves physically or verbally, and both may be disruptive to the class and the teacher. His research determined that often the issue is not determining the reason for the behavior but how to prevent the behaviors from disrupting productivity of the students and the classroom environment.

Using an unstructured interview method, Baloğlu (2009) selected 1100 11th grade students from a public school. Using the Problem Behavior Checklist of Students, based on research by Partin, Baloglu sampled 275 students to determine what types of behaviors students listed as negative behavior by the teacher. The research questions focused on the beliefs of the learners about negative teacher behavior and whether gender played a role in their opinions. The results showed that students felt their teacher exhibited aggressive behaviors most, and teachers who are under stress and dealing with disruptive students may exhibit aggressive behavior as a means of dealing with the situation. Additionally, students felt teachers spoke too fast (especially male teachers), were intimidating (low marks), and showed discriminatory attitudes. "Classroom management is not only to focus on student behavior or behavior management in a classroom setting but also to control teacher's own behavior"

(Baloğlu, 2009, p. 76). Also addressed as negative behavior was the way teachers dressed and favoritism being shown, particularly to female students.

### **Virtues, Morals, and Beliefs in Teaching**

Moore (2008) described his research as showing that teachers today are entering classrooms with in-depth content knowledge, poor classroom management skills, negative attitudes, and lacking skills to stop disruptive behavior that may hinder the learning process. Moore also states that teachers are using what they have to complete their jobs; however, it may not be effective enough to produce results. Teachers have the job of not only teaching the students, but disciplining and motivating the students to learn.

Moore (2008) goes on to point out that, “some researchers have found that novice teachers, and many veteran teachers, admit they lack effective classroom management skills and student motivation tactics that encourage learning” (p. 1). The lack of the effective classroom management skills or appropriate training could contribute to poor student performance and could also prove to affect the students’ overall success. Moore found that negative classroom behavior was a key contributing issue to teacher anxiety and dissatisfaction, which affected the Educators’ ability to sustain a safe and civil learning atmosphere. Baloğlu (2009) agreed, stating the following:

Teachers frequently differ markedly in their tolerance of behavior difficulties, and it is not uncommon for two teachers in the same school to have very different views about whether or not a pupil has a behavior problem. This does not mean that one is right and the other is wrong; rather it reflects the different values and attitudes that the individuals hold

and the different expectations they have for the behavior of their pupils.

(p. 71)

Teachers must make efforts to form positive relationships with students in an effort to increase student performance as well as encourage student success. Positive relationships could be the difference between failure and success for a student in the classroom. In order for a positive student relationship to be formed, the teacher has to show that there is some sense of caring. Teven (2007) maintains for students to view teachers as caring and a credible source, teachers are required to be good communicators in the classroom. He states, "Perceived caring is an interpretation of another person's communication behavior" (p. 435).

Therefore, if the students do not perceive that the teacher cares about their success, their own behavior and attitude may reflect this. Teven (2007) observed that students reflected negative behaviors in the classroom setting. Additionally, his study showed that that positive teacher-student relationships improved academic performance and also decreased ideas about sexual promiscuity, suicides, expressing unacceptable behaviors, distress, violence, and substance abuse.

A study conducted by Murray, Murray, and Waas (2008) measured kindergartners' perceptions of communal support from teachers. Through their study they determined that teachers were aware that they offer additional emotional or psychological support to one culture over the other.

These findings suggest that teacher perceptions of students were more positive for students from the same racial backgrounds as their own.



However, it is important to note that although teachers perceived relationships differently according to racial group, there were no significant differences in child perception of relationship quality or child perceptions of school adjustment. (p. 58)

This study showed that while young children may not have had the capabilities to determine differences in emotional or social support, they had a perception of what support and caring was. Furthermore, the students did not understand that the lack of support and caring was because of their ethnicity. According to the study, the students did not perceive the NCATE disposition of fairness that should be exemplified in all educators. Murray et al. also established through their study that the student-teacher relationship was important in helping the student to adjust.

The researchers determined that trust and warmth in a teacher-student attachment relationship is an important predictor of a child's early adjustment and attachment to school. The students within the study at a young age were able to adjust to the school setting when the teacher exhibited those behaviors that caused them to be comfortable.

This research indicates the importance of the present study. In order for teachers to show moral and ethical character, certain positive verbal and non verbal behaviors should be exhibited such as enthusiasm, happiness, and excitement about and for the students they are teaching. Bias or favoritism may be exhibited in the classroom as well that may show the teachers' lack of fairness.

## **Affect of Quality Education**

The circumstances of teacher working conditions may affect the quality of education. Kozol (2007), in *Letters to a New Teacher*, states that frequent reasons for the soaring slow destruction in teaching possibly include disruptive student behavior, school politics, and lack of administrative support. Baloğlu (2009) found in his research that most teachers, though they face normal fears of failure, are reasonable and committed to their careers. He also states that some teachers will also be cynical, distracted, and militant in their practices, and these types of behaviors may have a negative effect on quality classroom teaching.

Walsh (n.d.) states the following:

Researchers have yet to figure out how to isolate the effect of the teacher from these “non-teacher classroom effects,” such as the influence of other students on a child’s ability to learn. These other classroom effects turn out to be quite “noisy”—not just literally but statistically, making it hard to measure accurately a teacher’s true effectiveness. (p. 5)

The question of whether these factors effect student achievement is only part of the problem. The quality of teacher education is measured primarily by observable dispositions. The hidden curriculum and characteristics are found within the dispositions, which are used in preparing future teachers, assessing teacher performance, and assessing teacher quality. Rike (2007) states, “If planned carefully and using specific criteria that are communicated clearly and used consistently and fairly, the assessment of dispositions can help students become better teachers while developing attitudes of professionalism” (p. 151).

## **Professional Judgment and NCATE Dispositions**

The use of professional judgment requires knowledge and skills that are learned. Dottin (2007) states that exhibiting sound judgment shows that one has the skills and knowledge and the ability to act appropriately with the skills and knowledge. The research states that professionals are expected to be competent and deliver sound judgment. NCATE disposition focus on how educators should act as they relate to student, families, and communities, therefore, the professional judgment should be included when discussing dispositions.

Factors that might affect student achievement include lack of parental involvement, peer pressure, and discipline issues to name a few. While facing these issues teachers must deal with the negative behaviors students exhibit while in their classrooms. Teachers must discipline the students in order to control the classroom environment. Cameron and Sheppard (2006) researched the connection between school discipline procedures and identified the relationship between these procedures and (a) poorly behaved students and (b) academic achievement. Those who are most responsible for disciplining students are the teachers and administrators who see these students most of the day. In this study, the researchers found that individuals who work with these students on a daily basis made the greatest impact within the school environment.

Although there is literature to support the importance of the NCATE teaching dispositions, there is little evidence that these dispositions are being effectively implemented in the classroom. While administrators can observe a

teacher intermittently, students can observe teachers' verbal and non-verbal behaviors daily. This is why it is important to assess the students' perceptions of the NCATE teaching dispositions.

### **Summary**

Taken together, the studies reviewed provided an overview of the importance of (a) student perception surrounding NCATE dispositions, (b) student perception of teacher quality and effectiveness, and (c) student perception of teachers' affect toward the students. The literature shows that the NCATE dispositions are important in some teacher education programs; however, two primary dispositions that are often stated but not exhibited in teaching practice are (a) fairness and (b) belief that all students can succeed. According to the literature, the types of verbal and non-verbal communications teachers' exhibit within an educational setting affect a student's perception as well as student achievement.

The literature reviewed in this chapter also reviewed historical data regarding the relationship between teacher caring, professional judgment, and the role teacher caring plays within the NCATE teaching dispositions. For this study, student perception was used to measure teacher caring and professional judgment as the literature has demonstrated the importance of doing so.

## **Chapter 3: Method**

### **Research Design**

This study used a quantitative method to examine what impact, if any, teachers' dispositions have on students' academic engagement and achievement. The survey was conducted at one point in time and included teachers with 3 or more years of teaching experience and students in Grades 9 through 12. The tools that were used are the Teacher Disposition Survey and the Student Perception Survey created by the researcher to measure verbal and non-verbal representations of fairness and belief that every child can learn. Two data sources were used: self-report survey and archival data (student grades).

### **Restatement of Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of their own in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey, which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards?
2. What are students' perceptions of their teachers' in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Student Perception Survey, which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards?
3. Is there a relationship between (a) teachers' perceptions of their own dispositions as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey and (b) students' perception of their teacher's disposition as measured by the Student Perception Survey?

4. Is there a relationship between average students' course grades and their perceptions of teachers' dispositions as measured by the student grades from ABC School and the Student Perception Survey?

### **Rationale**

This study gathered self-report data about (a) students' perceptions of the teacher's dispositions based on students' observations of teacher behavior in the classroom and (b) teachers' self report about their own dispositions. These dispositions are conceptually equated with teacher attitudes and are based on the NCATE dispositions. The Student Perception Survey was used to gauge the students' perspective of particular dispositions observed within the classroom setting at ABC School.

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education dispositions state there are certain attitudes and behaviors teachers should use in the classroom, such as caring, which as shown in Table 1 aligns with the dispositions measured by the Student Perception Survey. For the study, teacher self-report scores were gathered to determine the teachers' perception of their use or non use of verbal or non-verbal behaviors in the classroom. This method was selected to assess the relationship between (a) the NCATE dispositions as indicated by current observable moods, attitudes, and behaviors as perceived by students, and (b) student grades.

### **Sampling Procedures**

The sampling procedure for students was purposive. The teacher participants sampled for this study were selected based on the following criteria: (a) experience of 1 year or more in a secondary education setting, (b) employed

full time at ABC School, and (c) teaching English or Math. The sampled student participants had the following criteria: (a) 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade students at ABC School, (b) taking English or Math at the high school level, (c) in one of the classes being taught by the teacher participants for this study.

### **Population and Sample**

The student population consisted of 785 students from Asian, Indian, Caucasian, Hispanic, and African American backgrounds. The population consisted of students at ABC School, which is located in a suburban area in Southern California. The total population of teachers within the school is 40 teachers. For this study 10 who teach English and 8 who teach math were surveyed. For this study, approximately 18 teacher participants were sampled from the total population of 40 teachers. There were approximately 300 student participants sampled from the total population of 785. The student participants were drawn from the 9<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade English and Math classes taught by teachers who were also being surveyed, and students were separated into two groups: English, and Math.

### **Materials and Documents**

The following materials and documents were used in the study procedures:

- APPENDIX A: Research Questions and Descriptive Analysis
- APPENDIX B: Permission to Conduct Study at ABC School
- APPENDIX C: Instructions for of ABC School
- APPENDIX D: Informed Consent Letter to Teachers
- APPENDIX E: Teachers Disposition Survey

- APPENDIX F: Informed Consent Letter to Parents
- APPENDIX G: Letter of Assent for Students
- APPENDIX H: Student Perceptions Survey

### **Data Collection, Setting, and Procedures**

The study took place in the Spring of 2012 once permission was obtained from ABC School and from the Institutional Review Board (Appendix B). Teacher and student participation in this study was voluntary. The researcher sought informed consent from teacher participants and assent from student participants prior to survey distribution. The following procedures were followed for data collection (Appendix C):

1. The researcher distributed to the English and math teachers a uniquely coded packet with the following: (a) Informed Consent Letter to Teachers (Appendix D), (b) Teachers Disposition Survey (Appendix E), and (c) two stamped envelopes with the address of the researcher. The purpose of the survey was explained to the teacher respondents in the informed consent form. Teachers were instructed to mail their consent forms separately from their surveys so that the two will not be linked. Teachers were assured confidentiality in the data gathering process and informed that this study is not associated with the school or the district evaluations.
2. Teachers who stated they had agreed to participate and returned the informed consent and survey were asked to distribute to each student a copy of the Informed Consent Letter to Parents (Appendix F). Attached to that document was the Letter of Assent for Students(Appendix G). The



teachers were asked to place an envelope provided by the researcher in a conspicuous location. Students were informed to read the documents with their parents, sign if they choose to, and then return the signed documents to that envelope by a certain date (on or before the date the student survey was to be administered). The researcher sought assent from student participants prior to survey distribution (see Appendix F, Appendix G, and Appendix H). The researcher explained that the survey is confidential and will be used for research purposes.

3. Students were reminded verbally at the time that this was a confidential survey and that they can choose not to participate. Students were also assured confidentiality in the data gathering process and informed that this is a study not associated with the school. Students were also informed that this is not a test or examination to be graded. Students were instructed to read with their parents the letter of parental consent (Appendix F) and student assent form (Appendix G), then return the forms to an envelope designated by the teacher.
4. Teachers took a 10 to 30 minute break while the students took their surveys, at a time set up by the teacher.
5. The researcher or administrative staff member invited students who were not yet finished the survey after 30 minutes to accompany the administrator to another room to complete their surveys, and the teacher returned to the classroom to resume teaching.
6. The researcher thanked the teacher and students for their participation.

7. For archival data to answer research question 4, the student grades were collected at the end of the term from the administrative office. Student's grades were averaged, then compared with the data gathered from the Student Perception Survey.

For research question 4, the student grades were collected at the end of the term. Student grades were averaged for each class, and then compared with the data gathered from the Student Perception Survey to see whether teacher dispositions correlate with student grades.

### **Human Subjects**

In keeping with all regulations of Pepperdine University, this study took precautions to protect any and all human subjects from harm. Approval for this study and access to participants was obtained from the ABC School, as required by Pepperdine University. The study design was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) with an expedited review application for approval before the study is conducted. The researcher delivered the surveys to the school after approval was obtained from Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). An informed consent letter introducing the study and requesting their participation was given to the teachers regarding the research. The letter to the teachers explained the purpose, duration, and procedures involved in this study. Teacher participation in this study was voluntary and there was no more than minimal risk to participants as the survey was confidential.

Before the student participants' received the letter of introduction, the researcher submitted a parental letter of consent and a letter of student assent to the school administrator that was distributed to students. The students were

instructed to read the letter of student assent with a parent or guardian. The informed consent letter included research information to parents and a request for permission from parents for their child to participate in the study. The letter asked for parent permission and explained the purpose, duration, and procedures involved in this study. The letter also explained the risks and benefits and how data obtained was to be treated confidentially. Student participation in this study was voluntary. The student survey was also confidential; therefore there was no more than minimal risk to the participant. A number was assigned to each survey to assist in the data collection process. The survey was hand delivered to the school to be distributed by an administrative staff member designated by the principal of the school. The researcher had minimal personal contact with teachers or students to ensure confidentiality.

### **Instrumentation**

This was a quantitative study using the Teacher Disposition Survey (Appendix B) and the Student Perception Survey (Appendix C), which was created by the researcher. The Teacher Disposition survey was created based on the two primary dispositions from the NCATE, fairness and the belief that every child can learn. This is a 32-item self-report measure about verbal and non-verbal factors that a student may perceive or the teacher may exhibit within the classroom setting.

Table 1 shows the statements from questions 1-15, which focused on positive forms of classroom fairness, alignment with NCATE teaching dispositions, as well as alignment with the standards of the CCTC (1997) and NCATE (2008). Therefore, for this study, the Student Perception Survey and the

Teacher Dispositions Survey was used to measure the extent to which both teachers' perceptions and students' perceptions of in-class teacher actions align with both CCTC Standards and NCATE teaching dispositions.

Table 1

*NCATE/CCTC Teaching Dispositions and Survey Questions*

NCATE Teaching Dispositions	CCTC Professional Dispositions for all Candidates	Surveys
Fairness	Candidates demonstrate classroom behaviors consistent with fairness & belief that all students can learn	Questions 1-9, 12, 15, 24, 27, 28, address Fairness, Unfairness and Bias toward students address positive perspective about fairness.
Belief that every student can learn	Candidates demonstrate classroom behaviors consistent with fairness & belief that all students can learn	Questions 10, 13, 14, 16-21, 23 address student perception of teachers belief in their abilities
Perceptions	Dispositions are reflected in their work with students, families, and communities	Questions 11, 22, 25, 26, 29, 30-32 address verbal and non verbal behaviors which may or may not be exhibited in the classroom setting

Table 1 shows the connection between the NCATE, CCTC Teaching dispositions, and the Teacher Disposition Survey and Student Perception Survey. The connection is shown in the descriptive subscales through the terms that show emotional states. The terms such as *enthusiastic*, *proud*, and *confident* were used to describe those demonstrated classroom dispositions and

emotions that should be consistent with fairness and belief that all students can learn.

The term *fairness* was connected to terms such as *validity*, *ethics*, and *morality*; unfairness has been linked to injustice, dishonesty, partial or biased treatment (Davies, 2010; J. E. Helms, 2006; Kane, 2010; Xiaoming, 2010). Further studies have determined that fairness is critical to grading practices (Gordan & Fay, 2010), testing procedures (Lizzio, Wilson, & Hadaway, 2007), as well as learning and motivation (Chory-Assad, 2002).

### **Instrument Validity and Reliability**

Multiple steps were taken to ensure content validity. The researcher created an alignment table (Table 1) to show the connections between the NCATE dispositions, CCTC dispositions, and the surveys created by the researcher for this study. The researcher sought a panel of judges to assess the validity of the survey. According to Rosensitto (1999), certain criteria must be followed when selecting judges who might critique and check validity of a newly created survey. The researcher followed these criteria, which included requesting that the questions be reviewed by a qualified and disinterested party. For this study, such a review entailed selecting a professor with an earned academic doctorate degree who is unfamiliar with this study and unfamiliar with the researcher.

Additionally during this process of validation, when changes were required, more than two panel members must suggest this change in order for the change to be considered important (Rosensitto, 1999). Once changes were made and the instrument validated, the researcher submitted the survey to IRB

for approval so that the instrument could be used for data collection. Cronbach reliability coefficients ranged from .88 to .97, with the highest being .97 for Scale 4: Total for all survey questions, with .88 being the lowest for Perceptions subscale.

### **Analytical Techniques**

Once surveys were completed and returned, all statistical survey data set was entered into the Number Cruncher Statistical System (NCSS). Data was reported about the number of participants as well as the number of those who chose not to participate or not to return the survey. The researcher reviewed and discussed the effect that non responses may have on the survey results. For the dependent variables, each student submitted answers on the Student Disposition Survey, which yielded standardized measures for both the fairness and the belief that every student can learn. The independent variable was the scores from the teachers' self assessment survey of their verbal and non verbal behaviors that indicate their ability to show fairness and their belief in their students' abilities. To sum up, the students' descriptive scores were combined with the teacher's self assessment descriptive scores to predict the level to which these dispositions are perceived by the student. These variables were measured as a categorical score. The statistical technique that was used was the Pearson correlation. This was selected because it is considered the most appropriate statistical test to enable the researcher to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2009).

Once calculated and analyzed, the data set was presented in table form with results from the statistical tests interpreted. For this study, descriptive

statistics was used to describe the measures associated with this population. The responses from respondents were analyzed as described in the following subsections:

**Research question 1.** What are teachers' perceptions of their own in-class dispositions at ABC School, as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey, which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards? The data set to answer this question was taken from the Teacher Disposition Survey and based on the questions that address fairness. For example survey item 1 states, "I believe I treat my students fairly." The responses on a Likert scale range from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*.

For this question, measures of central tendency were employed to identify the more concentrated responses. Data was also analyzed with calculations of the mean, median, range, interquartile range, and standard deviation.

**Research question 2.** What are students' perceptions of their teachers' in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Student Perception Survey, which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards? The data set for this research question was drawn from the Student Perception Survey created by the researcher. Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics, such as determining measures of central tendency. The mean, median, and mode of each statement and response were calculated to measure students' perceptions of what they have observed at some time in their classroom. Other measures for this question include the range average deviation and standard deviation.

**Research question 3.** Is there a relationship between (a) teachers' perception of their own disposition as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey and (b) students' perception of their teacher's disposition as measured by the Student Perception Survey? Data was obtained from both the teacher and student survey tools analyzed with the NCCS software and compared for relationships. Pearson Correlation was used to determine if there is a relationship between the teachers' self perception of in class dispositions and the students' perception of the teachers' in-class dispositions. For research question 3, in addition to descriptive statistics, correlational analysis was applied to examine possible relationships between teacher's perception of their teaching dispositions and students perception of the teachers' verbal and non-verbal behaviors and how they relate to the NCATE teaching dispositions.

**Research question 4.** Is there a relationship between average students' course grades and their perceptions of teachers' dispositions as measured by the averaged students' course grades and the Student Perception Survey. The data set for this question was analyzed by regression measures to show whether a correlation exists.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 presents the methodology, restatement of the research questions, instrumentation, and participants to be studied. Additionally, the chapter gives a justification for (a) use of the Teacher Disposition Survey to measure self-reported teacher fairness and belief in all students' ability to succeed and (b) use of the Student Perception Survey in this study to measure students' perception of the NCATE teaching dispositions. Analytical techniques



were also described, and how they relate to the research questions. Chapter 4 contains the results of data analysis and Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the results.

## **Chapter 4: Results**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify what relationship, if any, existed between (a) teachers' perception of their own dispositions and behaviors that align with National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's (NCATE) teaching dispositions and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) standards within the classroom, (b) their students' perception of teachers' dispositions and behaviors that align with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC standards within the classroom at ABC School, and (c) whether students' academic achievement, as measured by their course grades, relates to students' perception of their teachers' in-class dispositions and behaviors. This study focused on students in Grades 9 through 12 at ABC School.

### **Return Rate**

On March 16, 2012, the consent letter and survey was placed in the 18 mailboxes of English and Math Teachers at ABC school. The teachers' response time was 3 days. The student surveys were administered 3 days after the teachers returned their self-evaluation survey. A total of 746 students were invited to participate. A total of 9 teachers and 312 students participated in this study, for a response rate of 50 % for the teacher surveys and 42% for the student survey. Four of the student's surveys were discarded because of too many missing answers.

### **Results of the Survey**

The frequency counts from the teacher surveys for selected variables are displayed on Table 2. Of the teacher participants, 44% taught 9th grade students

in English or Math, 56% taught 10th grade students in English or Math, 67% taught 11th grade students in English or Math teachers, and 67% taught 12th grade students in English or Math teacher, For teacher respondents, there were more male participants (56%) than female participants (44%). One teacher had less than 5 years of experience and the other eight (89%) of teacher respondents answered more than 5 years of experience in education.

Table 2

*Frequency Counts for Selected Variables: Teacher Survey*

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Grade level taught	9th	4	44
	10th	5	56
	11th	6	67
	12th	6	67
Gender	Male	5	56
	Female	4	44
Years of Experience	Less than 5 years	1	11
	More than 5 years	8	89

*Note.* (*N* = 9). Percentages do not equal 100 for grade level taught, because multiple responses were possible if teacher taught more than one grade.

The frequency counts from the student survey for selected variables are displayed on Table 3. Student respondents were in 9th grade (16%), 31% of student respondents were in 10th grade, 19% of student respondents were in 11th grade and 33% of student respondents were in 12th grade. There were 56% male participants and 44% were female.

Table 3

*Frequency Counts for Selected Variables: Student Survey*

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Grade level of student	9th	51	16
	10th	97	31
	11th	60	19
	12th	104	33
Gender	Male	172	56
	Female	136	44

*Note.* (*N* = 308)

**Research Question 1**

The survey given to teacher participants asks: What are teachers' perceptions of their own in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey which aligns with National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) teaching dispositions and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) Standards? Table 4 displays descriptive statistics for the questions, which are sorted from highest to lowest mean score. Each teacher participant rated each question on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Perception Survey Sorted by Highest Mean Score*

Questions	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
7. I typically allow my students to ask questions.	5.00	0.00
2. I believe I treat my students fairly when giving grades.	4.89	0.33
16. I care about my students' success.	4.89	0.33
1. I believe I treat my students fairly in the classroom.	4.78	0.44
31. I like being a teacher.	4.78	0.44
32. I like my students.	4.78	0.44
6. I typically make my students feel welcomed.	4.67	0.50
24. I listen when students have issues.	4.67	0.50
20. I praise or otherwise give recognition to my students when they do well.	4.56	0.53
21. I do not allow any students to mistreat other students.	4.56	0.53
23. I show my students that I care.	4.56	0.73
8. I believe I am fair.	4.44	0.73
11. I make my students feel comfortable to speak in class.	4.44	0.73
18. I believe in my students.	4.44	0.53
17. I have confidence in my students' abilities.	4.33	0.50
3. I believe I treat my students fairly when asking questions.	4.22	0.44
5. I interact with my students one-on-one regularly.	4.22	0.97
19. I differentiate instruction for students who may have trouble understanding the lessons.	4.22	0.83
25. I tend to be pleasant.	4.22	1.09
14. I help my students when they have problems.	4.11	1.27
22. My students know they can trust me.	4.11	1.05
30. I believe my students like me.	3.89	0.60
4. I believe I receive a fair response when students ask questions.	3.78	0.44
27. I treat all students the same.	3.44	1.42
<i>(continued)</i>		

Questions	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
28. I may embarrass students at times.	3.11	0.93
10. I sometimes I find myself ignoring certain students.	2.33	1.32
9. I often teach to only a select group in class that seems motivated to learn.	2.22	1.20
15. My attitude in the classroom does not affect the student's academic performance.	2.11	1.17
26. I tend to be angry or hostile at times.	2.11	1.17
12. I sometimes display non-verbal behaviors that may make the students feel uncomfortable.	2.00	1.32
13. I treat some students unfairly sometimes.	1.89	0.93
29. I sometimes take my emotions out on students.	1.89	1.27

*Note.* ( $N = 308$ ). Ratings based on 5-point scale: 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

Item 7, "I typically allow my students to ask questions," was the highest rated ( $M = 5.00$ ), along with item 2, "I believe I treat my students fairly when giving grades" ( $M = 4.89$ ). Rating lowest was item 2, "I sometimes take my emotions out on students" ( $M = 1.89$ ) and item 13 and "I treat some students unfairly sometimes" ( $M = 1.89$ ; see Table 4).

Table 5

*Summated Scale Scores for Teacher Perception Characteristics*

Scale Score	Number of Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
Fairness scale	14	4.06	0.43	3.29	4.43
Belief scale	10	4.34	0.30	3.80	4.70
Perceptions scale	8	3.92	0.53	2.88	4.50
Total	32	4.11	0.40	3.34	4.53

*Note.* ( $N = 9$ ). Table 5 shows the summated scores (3 subscales and 1 total scale) for the teacher perception survey based on the 32 survey questions. The four teacher self-perception ratings were from  $M = 3.92$  to  $M = 4.11$  on a 5-point scale.

## Research Question 2

The student survey asked: What are students' perceptions of their teachers' in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Student Perception Survey, which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards? Table 6 shows descriptive statistics for the 32 student survey questions sorted from highest mean score to lowest mean score. The ratings were based on a 5-point metric scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics for Student Perception Survey Ratings Sorted from Highest to Lowest*

Questions	M	SD
10. I believe my teacher ignores me <sup>a</sup>	4.15	1.00
1. I believe my teacher treats me fairly in the classroom	4.08	1.08
4. I believe I receive a fair response when asking questions	4.03	1.00
3. I believe my teacher is fair when asking questions	4.02	1.00
7. I am always able to ask questions	4.00	1.09
2. I believe my teacher treats me fairly when giving grades	3.98	1.09
14. I believe my teacher helps me when I have problems	3.95	1.08
5. My teacher interacts with me regularly	3.92	1.04
12. My teacher does things that make me feel uncomfortable <sup>a</sup>	3.92	1.19
24. My teacher listens when I have a concern	3.91	1.02
21. My teacher does not allow other students to mistreat me	3.89	0.94
11. I don't feel comfortable to speak in class	3.89	1.12

(continued)

Question	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
31. My teacher seems to like being a teacher	3.87	1.03
30. I like my teacher	3.87	1.16
6. My teacher always makes me feel welcomed	3.85	1.12
23. I believe my teacher is caring	3.85	1.01
16. I believe my teacher cares about my success	3.85	1.10
20. My teacher praises or recognizes me when I do well.	3.84	1.04
8. I believe my teacher is fair	3.81	1.11
32. I believe my teacher likes me	3.78	1.09
18. My teacher believes in me.	3.78	1.06
17. My teacher shows me that he or she has confidence in me.	3.74	1.08
22. My teacher is someone I can trust	3.73	1.16
25. My teacher is pleasant.	3.72	1.14
26. My teacher is angry or hostile. <sup>a</sup>	3.71	1.17
15. My teacher's attitudes affect my academic performance <sup>a</sup>	3.65	1.19
19. My teacher makes sure I understand the lessons	3.63	1.18
13. I believe my teacher treats some students unfairly. <sup>a</sup>	3.50	1.31
9. I believe my teacher teaches some students more than others in class <sup>a</sup>	3.42	1.25
28. My teacher embarrasses students <sup>a</sup>	3.40	1.30
29. My teacher takes his or her emotions out on students <sup>a</sup>	3.29	1.31
27. My teacher treats all students the same <sup>a</sup>	3.28	1.26

*Note.* ( $N = 308$ ) 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

<sup>a</sup> Negatively worded items where *strongly disagree* was the most favorable answer.

The highest rated statements were Item 10, [reverse scored], "I believe my teacher ignores me" ( $M = 4.15$ ) and Item 1, "I believe my teacher treats me fairly in the classroom" ( $M = 4.08$ ). The lowest rated items were Item 27, "My teacher



treats all students the same” ( $M = 3.28$ ) and Item 29, “My teacher takes his or her emotions out on students” ( $M = 3.29$ ).

Table 7 shows the summated scores (3 subscales and 1 total scale) for the student perception survey based on the 32 survey questions. Cronbach reliability coefficients ranged from .88 to .97, with the highest being .97 for Scale 4: Total for all survey questions with .88 being the lowest for Perceptions.

Table 7

*Summated Scale Scores for Student Perception Characteristics*

Score	Number of Items	$M$	$SD$	Low	High	Alpha
Fairness	14	3.80	.77	1.71	5.00	.91
Belief	10	3.82	.83	1.40	5.00	.92
Perceptions	8	3.73	.85	1.25	5.00	.88
Total	32	3.79	.77	1.72	5.00	.97

*Note.* ( $N = 308$ )

### Research Question 3

Is there a relationship between (a) teachers’ perceptions of their own dispositions as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey and (b) students’ perception of their teacher’s disposition as measured by the Student Perception Survey? The four subscales scores for the teachers were compared to the four equivalent subscale scores for the students. The specific correlations are as follows: fairness ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p = .001$ ), belief ( $r = .06$ ,  $p = .26$ ), Perception ( $r = .17$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and total perception ( $r = -.03$ ,  $p = .64$ ). Scale 1: Fairness showed a significant negative correlation ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p = .001$ ). The Teacher’s perception of fairness is different than the student perception of fairness ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p = .001$ ).

For Scale 2: Belief, there was no significant relationship between Teachers belief score and students belief score ( $r = .06$ ,  $p = .26$ ). Scale 3: Perceptions, there is a significant positive correlation between the teacher's perception score and the student's perception score ( $r = .17$ ,  $p = .002$ ). For Scale 4, the total scale shows there is no significant relationship between the teachers total score and the students total score ( $r = -.03$ ,  $p = .64$ ).

#### **Research Question 4**

Is there a relationship between average students' course grades and their perceptions of teachers' dispositions as measured by the student grades from ABC School and the Student Perception Survey? To answer this question, the student's first semester grade was correlated with the four scale scores and the 32 perception ratings. For the resulting 36 correlations, nine were significant at the  $p < .05$  level. The three largest correlations were the student's grade with: Item 29, "My teacher takes his or her emotions out on students" ( $r = -.24$ ,  $p = .001$ ), Item 9, "I believe that my teacher teaches some students more than others in class" ( $r = -.16$ ,  $p = .006$ ), and Item 7, "I am always able to ask questions" ( $r = .14$ ,  $p = .01$ ).

#### **Additional Findings**

The student's grade level (9th to 12th) was correlated with the four scale scores and the 32 perception ratings. For the resulting 36 correlations, 28 were significant at the  $p < .05$  level. The three largest correlations were the student's grade level with: Item 2, "I believe my teacher treats me fairly when giving grades" ( $r = .28$ ,  $p = .001$ ), Item 22, "My teacher is someone I can trust" ( $r = .27$ ,  $p = .001$ ), and Item 30, "I like my teacher" ( $r = .26$ ,  $p = .001$ ).

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify what relationship, if any, exists between (a) teachers' perception of their own dispositions and behaviors that align with NCATE teaching dispositions and California CCTC standards within the classroom, (b) their students' perception of teachers' dispositions and behaviors that align with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC standards within the classroom at ABC School, and (c) whether students' academic achievement, as measured by their course grades, relates to students' perception of their teachers' in-class dispositions and behaviors.

This last chapter will summarize the study design, report research findings and evaluate the findings in comparison to prior research. This chapter will also describe the limitations of this study and implications of further studies.

### **Summary of the Design**

Teacher participants ( $N = 9$ ) were asked to take the Teacher Disposition Survey (Appendix B) and student participants ( $N = 308$ ) were asked to take the Student Perception Survey (Appendix C). Both surveys were created by the researcher. The Teacher Disposition survey and Student Perception Survey was created based on the two primary dispositions from the NCATE, fairness and the belief that every child can learn.

The researcher distributed to the English and math teachers a uniquely coded packet with the following: (a) Informed Consent Letter to Teachers (Appendix B) and (b) Teachers Disposition Survey (Appendix C). Informed Letters of Consent to Parents were distributed along with the Student Letter of Assent to students. Of the 18 teacher envelopes distributed, 9 completed

surveys were returned. Of the 746 surveys distributed, 312 surveys were returned. Four of the student's surveys were discarded because of too many missing answers. There was a 50% response rate for the teacher surveys and 42% for the student survey.

### **Summary of Findings**

**Research question 1.** What are teachers' perceptions of their own in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards as measured by the 32-item Teacher Disposition Survey? The data set for this research question was drawn from the Teacher Disposition Survey created by the researcher. According to the 4 subscales, the mean scores were Fairness,  $M = 4.06$ , Belief  $M = 4.34$ , Verbal/non verbal dispositions,  $M = 3.92$  and the total scale  $M = 4.11$ . The highest self-rated item was belief with a mean of 4.34. There were 10 questions teachers answered dealing with Belief that the students can learn.

The highest rated item among the teachers was item 16, "I care about my students success" ( $M = 4.89$ ). Items 20, 21 and 23 were tied with a mean of 4.56, "I praise or otherwise give recognition to my students when they do well," "I do not allow any students to mistreat other students," and "I show my students that I care." The lowest rated items were item 13, "I treat some students unfairly" ( $M = 1.89$ , reversed scored) and item 10, "I sometimes find myself ignoring certain students" ( $M = 2.33$ ).

According to Akiyama (2009) when discussing teacher beliefs, the research showed that teacher education begins with the personal beliefs and

past experiences of the individual, which shape ideas and perceptions. The response to this subscale shows that the teachers believe in a level of respect for their students as well as their personal belief in their education and their job in teaching their students.

The lowest rated items, Item 13 and Item 10, show that the teacher respondents were in agreement that they believe they treat the students fairly and they do not to ignore students. However, it may be necessary for a teacher to briefly ignore a student who is exhibiting poor behavior when trying to teach in order to prevent class disruption.

The lowest rated subscale was perception ( $M = 3.92$ ). This subscale included eight items. The highest rated was item 31, "I like being a teacher" ( $M = 4.78$ ) and item 32, "I like my students" ( $M = 4.78$ ). The lowest rated item within this subscale was item 29 ( $M = 1.89$ ; reversed score), "I sometimes take my emotions out on students" and Item 26 ( $M = 2.11$ ), "I tend to be angry or hostile at times." Baloğlu (2009) found in his research that most teachers, though they face normal fears of failure, are reasonable and committed to their careers.

Teachers are human and may sometime carry their personal issues into the classroom however most go to work with the best intentions. Many teachers can separate their personal life from work but some cannot. The response to these items in this subscale aligns with how a teacher should operate within a classroom according to the NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards.

**Research question 2.** What are students' perceptions of their teachers' in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Student Perception Survey, which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards?

The data set for this research question was drawn from the Student Perception Survey created by the researcher. According to the 4 subscales, the mean scores were fairness,  $M = 3.80$ , belief  $M = 3.82$ , perception,  $M = 3.73$  and the total scale  $M = 3.79$ . The highest self-rated item was belief with a mean of 3.82. There were 10 questions students answered dealing with belief that the students can learn.

The highest rated item among the students was item 10, "I believe my teacher ignores me" ( $M = 4.15$ .) The results show that the students agreed that with the statement. When students perceive the Teachers are available to help them it builds positive teacher student relationships. Teachers however are under tremendous pressures to meet district or state educational requirements and have limited time to pay attention to the personal needs of students.

Studies show that when there is a strong student-to-teacher relationship, the student shows progress for years to come (Walker et al., 2009; Wong et al., 2002). Conversely, the lack of teacher support results in negative student perception, negative attitude, and lack of interest toward learning. Therefore, the students may perceive a lack of support from their teachers.

The lowest rated item within the Belief Subscale for Students was item 13, "I believe the teacher treats some students unfairly" ( $M = 3.50$ ) and item 19, "My teacher makes sure I understand the lessons" ( $M = 3.63$ ). The findings suggest that students may feel that teachers do not always take their time when addressing students or making sure the student understands the lesson.

Teachers are under constant pressure to pace their lesson according the state guidelines. The fact that teachers are required to move at a certain pace to

cover a certain lesson, students might perceive this negatively. This perception may appear as if the teacher is not taking the time to make sure that the student thoroughly understands the lesson. The teacher may be trying to cover materials as required by the pacing plan or standard course of study. Additionally, some students may feel that certain students are being called on more than others. This behavior may be seen by a student as unfair treatment. The findings suggest that the disposition of belief of a student's ability to learn is being accurately perceived and being displayed by the teachers in the classroom.

The lowest rated subscale from the student survey was perceptions ( $M = 3.73$ ). The highest rated items within the perception subscale was item 11, "I don't feel comfortable to speak in class" ( $M = 3.89$ ). Also rated highly was item 30, "I like my teacher" and item 31, "my teacher seems to like being a teacher" ( $M = 3.87$  for both). The data set suggests that the perception of the teacher is one that is positive in that the teacher is likable and they like their job. However, the data set shows that the students do not feel comfortable speaking in class.

Walker et al. (2009) reported when students are comfortable in a setting, they feel included and are more likely to focus on the learning process and their abilities that make that understanding possible. So although the students perceive their teacher as likeable and someone who likes their job, they may not be comfortable enough to focus on the learning process and fully understand subject matter.

The lowest rated item in the perception subscale was item 29, "My teacher takes his or her emotions out on students" ( $M = 3.29$ ). The findings of this item suggest that some students felt the teacher displayed certain emotions in class

and some did not. These emotions could have been positive or negative emotions however student could perceive them either way.

Baloğlu (2009) discussed negative teacher behavior in the classroom and clarified that classroom management was as much about the teacher as it is the student. In this study of perceived negative behaviors of teachers, students perceived such things as the way a teacher dresses and favoritism being shown toward female students as negative. Though debatable, these things as perceived by the student are real to them and can make the student uncomfortable in the classroom setting according to the data.

**Research question 3.** Is there a relationship between (a) teachers' perception of their own disposition as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey and (b) students' perception of their teacher's disposition as measured by the Student Perception Survey? For research question 3, in addition to descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis was applied to examine possible relationships between teacher's perception of their teaching dispositions and student's perception of the teachers' verbal and non-verbal behaviors and how they relate to the NCATE teaching dispositions. For scale 1, fairness showed a significant negative correlation ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Teachers thought that they were fair whereas students thought differently. This could be due to several factors.

Mitchell et al. (2010) found that teacher's perception of the school environment may be different because teachers have greater control of the activities that go on throughout the day. Students, having less control, may view the activities that go on within the classroom as unfavorable. Therefore, they



may take on a passive attitude that may affect student learning. The findings for scale 1, fairness, suggests that although teachers perceive themselves as fair the performance of fairness toward the students may not be exhibited within the classroom. Therefore, the teacher's in-class performance of fairness does not align with NCATE or CCTC disposition of fairness.

The data from scale 2, belief in student's ability to learn, showed there was not significant relationship between the teacher's belief and the student's perception of the teacher's belief in their ability to learn. The findings suggest that the disposition of belief in a student's ability to learn is being exhibited within the classroom.

For scale 3, perceptions, correlations showed that there was a positive significant correlation between the teachers disposition and the students perception of the dispositions ( $r = .17$ ,  $p = .002$ ). The findings suggest that the student's perception of the teacher was positive and that verbal and non-verbal behaviors are being exhibited within the classroom, which is aligned with NCATE and CCTC teaching dispositions.

Total 4 score showed that there was no significant relationship between the teachers total score and the students total score ( $r = -0.03$ ,  $p = .64$ ).

**Research question 4.** Is there a relationship between average students' course grades and their perceptions of teachers' dispositions as measured by the averaged students' course grades and the Student Perception Survey? For scale 1, fairness, student grades were significantly higher when they had a higher fairness score ( $p = 0.04$ ), had a higher perception score ( $p = 0.03$ ) and a higher total score ( $p = .05$ ). When the students thought the teacher was fair, the

students performed better. These findings suggest that there is a relationship between average student's course grades and the teacher's disposition within the classroom. This result should be interpreted cautiously, because this result may indicate that (a) positive teacher disposition results in greater student learning or that (b) negative teacher disposition is found in teachers who grade more strictly.

### **Additional Findings**

A correlation between Grades 9 to 12 showed that students in higher grade levels produced higher student survey scores. The additional findings suggest that with age come wisdom and a more mature understanding of their role as a student in the teacher-student relationship.

### **Implications of the Study**

The findings imply that although they like their teachers, the students perceive that their teachers treatment as unfair whether it be toward themselves or other students. As stated previously in the literature review, perception Teven (2008) states, "Perceived caring is an interpretation of another person's communication behavior" (p. 435). If the teachers are exhibiting verbal and non verbal behaviors that (a) are not aligned with NCATE teaching dispositions or (b) aligned with CCTC standards then students do not perceive caring. Therefore, student achievement is affected.

As Baloğlu (2009) established that teachers have normal fears but are committed to their careers. The findings along with this literature imply that they believe in their students and their abilities. However, Baloğlu goes on to assert that some teachers will also be cynical, distracted, and militant in their practices,

and these types of behaviors may have a negative effect on quality classroom teaching. The findings of this study confirm previous literature that certain practices exhibited by teachers in a classroom setting may affect the student's ability to achieve.

In addition, research question 3, addresses the correlation between the teacher perception survey and the student perception survey. The data showed that both the students and teachers agree there is perceived belief in the student's abilities. As previously stated in the literature, Wong et al. (2002) research showed that when students perceived support from teachers, they achieved. The findings of this study further suggest that some form of a student-teacher relationship was exhibited even if students felt unfairness existed within that relationship. Therefore, there is a lack of trust, which also affects the student's ability to feel fully comfortable in the situation to achieve.

This study also shows a relationship between student grades and the student perception of fairness. This relationship may contribute to many failures that exist currently in public education including the high student dropout rate. The additional findings suggest that upper grade students, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade produced higher survey results. A high percentage of students however are dropping out of school before or around the age of 16. Therefore, most of the perceived unfairness has occurred prior to the student reaching the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The finding of this study may not be applicable to all student populations as the population was multiethnic, middle to primarily upper class students. The study findings may be different if conducted in an urban or rural area with

students and teachers of different socioeconomic backgrounds than those in this study.

### **Recommendations for Educators**

First, it is recommended that teachers participate in professional development training that focuses on treating students fairly and building positive student-teacher relationships. Teachers spend at least 6 hours a day with students, not only educating but also counseling and mentoring every child with whom they come in contact. Educators must consider that providing a quality education to students includes being aware of those verbal and non-verbal dispositions that can affect student achievement and success.

In the field of business, there is customer service training. Physicians have training in bedside manner. Educators need training in how to positively relate to their students so as to have a positive effect on student achievement.

Additionally, it is recommended that teachers evaluate their use or non-use of the dispositions. Thornton (2006) suggests that when teachers evaluate their classroom environment it helps students experience growth and success. Educators should evaluate not only curriculum and best practices in regards to the dispositions for which NCATE and CCTC states teachers are evaluated.

It is also recommended that students have the opportunity to evaluate the teacher disposition periodically since students are stakeholders in the education process. College students as stakeholders in their education do it for their professors. Elementary, middle and high school students should be allowed to evaluate on their level as well.

Educators must listen to the children. Most teacher training programs focus on best practices of curriculum and different learning modalities. However, Best practices should include evaluation of the dispositions as well as listening to the cares or the concerns of the children so as to understand how best to meet student needs. Finally, teachers should continue to show their belief in their students as studies show it is important to student achievement.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Little research exists on student perception of teacher dispositions. The researcher recommends the following future studies:

1. Replicated studies of student perception of teacher disposition with further focus on inner city or urban schools, gender-specific, ethnic-specific, age-specific, or economic specific study.
2. Contrast or comparisons of different states evaluation of the teaching disposition.
3. The relationship between student perception and administrator perception of the teaching dispositions.
4. Effective evaluations of teacher dispositions. NCATE has stated that it can be difficult to evaluate the disposition
5. Similar study to address the verbal or non verbal attitudes and behaviors that teachers are to exhibit within the classroom.

### **Conclusion**

The nation is calling for education reform. When considering education reform, educators should include evaluative practices that address the dispositions. This study has provided evidence that the dispositions are an

important part of education and should be included when discussing educational reform. For future teachers, it is imperative that current educational leaders take steps to stress not only the importance of being knowledgeable but also creating positive relationships with their students. Specific courses should be dedicated to the dispositions not just curriculum and pedagogy.

This study further supports research that advances the importance of student perception in educational practices. Efforts should be made to address the issue of fairness early in a student's educational journey to prevent further destruction of the educational system and society. Students are dropping out of high school at an alarming rate. Their perception is important. If a student's perception is one of the reasons for this problem then leaders must further evaluate the verbal and non-verbal dispositions as well as teacher quality and effectiveness.

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## APPENDIX A:

## Research Questions and Descriptive Analysis

Research Questions	Data Source	Analytical Technique
1. What are teachers' perceptions of their own in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey which aligns with National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) teaching dispositions and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) Standards?	Surveys	Descriptive statistics
2. What are students' perceptions of their teachers' in-class disposition at ABC School, as measured by the Student Perception Survey, which aligns with NCATE teaching dispositions and CCTC Standards?	Surveys	Descriptive statistics
3. Is there a relationship between (a) teachers' perceptions of their own dispositions as measured by the Teacher Disposition Survey and (b) students' perception of their teacher's disposition as measured by the Student Perception Survey?	Surveys	Correlation analysis
4. Is there a relationship between average students' course grades and their perceptions of teachers' dispositions as measured by the student grades from ABC School and the Student Perception Survey?	Surveys and existing documents (grades)	Comparison of the average for student grades to the average of student assessment of disposition

## APPENDIX B

## Permission to Conduct Study at ABC School

Re: Permission Letter

To Whom It May Concern:

I hereby give Kimberly R. Hudson, doctoral student at Pepperdine University School of Education and Psychology, permission to conduct her study, Student Perception of NCATE Teaching Dispositions at my school. Per our conversation, the school as well as all participants will remain anonymous in the study.

Signed this 4<sup>th</sup> day, of March, 2011

Name of the Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: Headmaster

Faithfully yours,

  
Signature

## APPENDIX C

## Instructions for of ABC School

Administrators of ABC School:

Thank you for approving this researcher's request to conduct this study on the topic of Student Perception of Teachers' NCATE Teaching Dispositions. Please note within this packet the signed copy of the document titled Permission to Conduct Study at your school.

The following instructions are provided to ensure that the data are gathered according to the protocol that has been approved by the IRB of Pepperdine University. If you have questions about any of the procedures, please contact the researcher at (949)336-7855 or Khudson@pepperdine.edu.

1. Enclosed you will find documents titled Informed Consent Letter to Teachers. Each letter of consent will be attached to a document titled Teachers Disposition Survey along with two envelopes with the address of the researcher. The Researcher will distribute in teachers mailbox one of the stapled document sets to each of the English and math teachers in your school, informing them the researcher will follow up at a particular time (approximately a week later) to collect completed surveys, provide incentives and to determine whether teachers have decided to participate. The researcher will request an area away from school personnel offices where teachers may drop off survey, pick up incentives and schedule time to perform student surveys.
2. Researcher will follow up with the teachers by placing a reminder in their mailboxes requesting a determination of whether teachers have decided to participate or not. For those who indicate that they have given their consent and have completed the survey, those teachers will be asked to establish a time during which the students can fill out a similar survey (the student survey described in the materials given to the teachers) that will take approximately 20-30 minutes.
3. Researcher will be at the school approximately a week later to collect sealed completed surveys and distribute incentives
4. Teachers will be asked to designate a student or another adult to distribute to each student a copy of the Informed Consent Letter to Parents. Attached to that document is the Letter of Assent for Students and an envelope. Students should be informed to read the documents with their parents, sign if they choose to, and then return the signed documents in the sealed envelope to the researcher by a certain date (on or before the date the student survey will be administered).
5. On the date appointed for the student survey, teachers will be asked to take a break from the classroom for a 30-minute period. The surveys with the following instructions will be read to students: "This is the survey about

which you and your parents were given information and a form to sign. If your parent or the adult you live with has not signed the form indicating permission for you to take the survey or if you have not signed the form indicating that you agree to take the survey, please read or find another quiet activity to do at your desk for the next 30 minutes. You may choose not to fill out the survey even if you and your parent or guardian have both signed the forms. Please do not put your name on the survey. Remember that no one from this school will see your responses. When you are finished, please put your survey in this envelope. If you do not finish in the next 30 minutes and still wish to complete all the survey questions, you may come with me to another room to finish.”

6. The Student Perceptions Survey will be passed out and students allowed placing finished surveys in the envelope.
7. At the end of 30 minutes, and when the teacher returns, invite any who have not yet finished to come to another room to complete their surveys
8. The researcher will thank the teacher and students for their participation.
9. When this process has been completed for each of the teachers who have agreed to participate, the researcher will thank the school staff for their assistance. I will make available a copy of the study results to the school (with the data aggregated), in the hope that this may help the administration ascertain the strengths of teaching staff and also possible areas for improvement that could be addressed in inservice trainings.
10. Please provide a copy of the end-of-course grades for each English and math class that participates. Please remove student names and other identifying information for participants prior to mailing the list of grades. Please do include the teacher name so that the grades for that class can be averaged and compared to the outcome of student dispositions.

## APPENDIX D

## Informed Consent Letter to Teachers

February 22, 2012

Dear Educator,

My name is Kimberly Hudson and I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy program at Pepperdine University conducting research for my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is *Student Perception of Teachers' NCATE Teaching Dispositions*. I am inviting you to voluntarily participate in my study, but you are in no way obligated. I have gained permission from your school to conduct my study. As a result, the survey will be administered by the researcher. In addition, teachers will receive a five dollar gift card for their participation.

The purpose of this study is to identify what relationship, if any, exists between (a) teachers' application of National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's (NCATE) teaching dispositions within the classroom and (b) their student's perception, in-class behaviors, academic achievement, and emotions toward teachers. Additionally, this study seeks to examine the importance of the student's perception of their teacher's in-class behaviors and how these perceptions effect student achievement. Knowledge of the student's perception of a teacher's in-class behavior may enable teachers to understand the positive or negative effects of in-class moods or behaviors and how it affects the student's classroom behaviors and achievement. Knowledge of student's perception may also assist educators in creating additional means of evaluating classroom teacher behavior.

Your participation in this study involves your completion of a two-page self-assessment survey. Your students will also be invited to participate by completing a similar two-page survey about their perceptions of you as a teacher. In total, 20-30 minutes will be allocated to complete the instrument. There are few to no risks associated with this study as the survey will be done confidentially. There are no foreseeable risks greater than those encountered in daily life.

All information you provide will remain confidential. The information will be kept in a locked file cabinet in my home. The student will not be audio or video taped at anytime. I will have NO direct contact whatsoever with your students as the surveys will be sealed prior being delivered to me. I will be the only person to have access to surveys once collected. You and the students will be informed NOT to place your names on the instrument.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time or refuse to take part. It is my responsibility to answer all questions and concerns about the study and you have the right to request a summary or copy of the results of the study.

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If the findings of the study are presented to professional audiences or published, no information that identifies you personally will be released. The data gathered will be stored in locked filed cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. Electronic data will be stored on the investigators computer, which is password protected and backed up on an external hard drive that is also password protected. The data will be maintained in a secure manner for 3 years at which time the data will be destroyed.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ or by mail at \_\_\_\_\_. If you have further questions or do not feel I have adequately addressed your concerns, please contact, Dr. Robert Barner at \_\_\_\_\_ pepperdine.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Dr. YuYing Tsong, Chairperson of the Institutional Review Board, and Pepperdine University at (310) 568-5768. Thank you very much for your time and participation.

Please sign below if you agree with this statement:

*I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## APPENDIX E

## Teachers Disposition Survey

## Instructions

On the next page are 32 items describing various verbal or non verbal behaviors, moods, and feelings. Please read each statement carefully then select a number to indicate how strongly you disagree or agree with the statement as it applies to you. This is not a test (there are no right or wrong answers).

Select the number that applies most closely to each item:

- (1) If you STRONGLY DISAGREE with what is described
- (2) If you DISAGREE of what is described
- (3) If you are UNDECIDED about what is described
- (4) If you AGREE with what is described
- (5) If you STRONGLY AGREE with what is described

The usefulness of the feedback from this inventory will depend on how honest you are with yourself about how frequently you *actually* engage in each of these actions and experience these emotions. Consider each statement in the context of your classroom. As you respond to each statement, maintain a consistent perspective to your particular organization. The rating scale provides five choices. Do *not* answer in terms of how you would like to see yourself or in terms of what you believe you should be doing. Answer in terms of how you *typically* behave. For example, the first statement is "I believe I treat my students fairly in the classroom." If you STRONGLY AGREE with this statement, circle the number 1 on the line beside that statement. If you believe you STRONGLY AGREE with the statement, circle the number 5 on the line beside that statement. Select only one option (response number) for each statement.

Please respond to every statement. If you can't respond to a statement (or feel that it doesn't apply), circle a 3 for UNDECIDED. When you have responded to all statements, please return the survey to the administrator.

**PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS SURVEY.**



## Teacher Disposition Survey

Instructions: Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by clearly circling the appropriate box.

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I believe I treat my students fairly in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I believe I treat my students fairly when giving grades.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I believe I treat my students fairly when asking questions.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I believe I receive a fair response when students ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I interact with my students one-on-one regularly.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I typically make my students feel welcomed.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I typically allow my students to ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I believe I am fair.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I often teach to only a select group in class that seems motivated to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I sometimes I find myself ignoring certain students.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I make my students feel comfortable to speak in class.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I sometimes display non-verbal behaviors that may make the students feel uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I treat some students unfairly sometimes.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I help my students when they have	1	2	3	4	5

problems.					
15. My attitude in the classroom does not affect the student's academic performance.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I care about my students' success.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I have confidence in my students' abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I believe in my students.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I differentiate instruction for students who may have trouble understanding the lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I praise or otherwise give recognition to my students when they do well.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I do not allow any students to mistreat other students.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My students know they can trust me.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I show my students that I care.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I listen when students have issues.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I tend to be pleasant.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I tend to be angry or hostile at times.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I treat all students the same.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I may embarrass students at times.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I sometimes take my emotions out on students.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I believe my students like me.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I like being a teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I like my students.	1	2	3	4	5

1. What grades do you teach:     9<sup>th</sup>            10<sup>th</sup>            11<sup>th</sup>            12<sup>th</sup>
2. Are you   Male or   Female
3. How many years of experience do you have in education
4. Less than 3 years            at least 3 years            More than 5 years

## APPENDIX F

## Informed Consent Letter to Parents

February 22, 2012

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Kimberly Hudson and I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy program at Pepperdine University conducting research for my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is *Student Perception of Teachers' NCATE Teaching Dispositions*. I am inviting your child to voluntarily participate in my study, but you are in no way obligated to allow him or her to participate. I have gained permission from your child's school to conduct my study. As a result, a survey will be given to students in your child's classroom by a teacher or designated adult representative. There is no monetary compensation for parents or students. Your student's participation in this study is important and is greatly appreciated. The study is for the benefit of future teachers and teacher education programs.

Basically, the study looks at what students think and feel about their teacher's attitudes, moods, and behaviors. Specifically, the study looks at whether or not students believe their teacher is fair and whether their teacher believes that all students can learn. In more technical terms, the purpose of this study is to identify what relationship, if any, exists between (a) teachers' application of National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's (NCATE) teaching dispositions within the classroom and (b) their student's perception, in-class behaviors, academic achievement, and emotions toward teachers. Additionally, this study seeks to examine the importance of the student's perception of their teacher's in-class behaviors and how these perceptions effect student achievement. Knowledge of the student's perception of a teacher's in-class behavior may enable teachers to understand the positive or negative effects of in-class moods or behaviors and how it affects the student's classroom behaviors and achievement. Knowledge of student's perception may also assist educators in creating additional means of evaluating classroom teacher behavior.

Your student's participation in this study involves the completion of a two-page survey. In total, 20-30 minutes will be allocated to complete the survey. There are few to no risks associated with this study as the survey will be done confidentially and confidentially. Your student's name will not be on the survey, but only circled responses. Your student's teacher and principal will not see the surveys. There are no foreseeable risks greater than those encountered in daily life. An example of minimal risk that might occur is a student accidentally placing their name on the survey. The researcher may see the student's name. However, this survey is confidential and no names will be used in this process.

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DATE ABOVE

All information your student provides will remain confidential. The information will be kept in a locked file cabinet in my home. Your child will not be audio or video taped at any time in connection with this research. I will have NO direct contact whatsoever with your student as the surveys will be sealed by the school staff before being delivered to me. I will be the only person to have access to surveys once collected. Your student will be informed NOT to write his or her name on the survey.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary; he or she may withdraw at any time or refuse to take part. It is my responsibility to answer all of your questions and concerns about the study and you have the right to request a summary or copy of the results of the study.

If the findings of the study are presented to professional audiences or published, no information that identifies you or your child personally will be released. The school will not be identified by name. The data gathered will be stored in locked filed cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. Electronic data will be stored on the investigator's computer, which is password protected and backed up on an external hard drive that is also password protected. The completed surveys will be maintained in a secure manner for 3 years at which time the data will be destroyed.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ or by mail at \_\_\_\_\_. If you have further questions or do not feel I have adequately addressed your concerns, please contact my advisor Dr. Robert Barner at \_\_\_\_\_@pepperdine.edu. If you have questions about your rights or your child's rights as a research participant, contact Dr. YuYing Tsong, Interim Chairperson of the Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University at (310) 568-5768 or \_\_\_\_\_@pepperdine.edu. Thank you very much for your time and participation.

Please sign below if you agree with this statement:

*I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## APPENDIX G

## Letter of Assent for Students

February 22, 2012

Dear Student,

My name is Kimberly Hudson and I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy program at Pepperdine University conducting research for my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is Student Perception of Teachers' National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's (NCATE) Teaching Dispositions. I am inviting you to voluntarily participate in my study, but you can choose whether or not you want to participate. I have gained permission from your school to invite you to participate. As a result, a survey (some questions to answer) will be given to you by a teacher or staff member if you agree to participate. There is no monetary compensation for parents or students. Your participation in this study is important and greatly appreciated. The study is for the benefit of future students, teachers, and teacher education programs.

The purpose of this survey (the questions you would answer) is basically to find out if you think your teacher is fair to you (and other students) and if you think your teacher believes that all students can learn. This study will also find out if teachers' think of themselves as fair and believes all students can learn.

This survey would be two pages of questions that could take up to 20 to 30 minutes to complete. The survey will be confidential, meaning that your name will not be on it. Your teacher, the principal, and no one else except the researcher (who does not work at your school) will see your responses to the survey. There are no foreseeable risks greater than those encountered in daily life. An example of minimal risk that might occur is a student accidentally placing their name on the survey. The researcher may see the student's name. However, this survey is confidential and no names will be used in this process.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, meaning that you can refuse to take the survey. If you start the survey and then decide not to finish it, that is also your choice. It is my responsibility to answer all your questions and concerns you may have about the study and you have the right to request a summary or copy of the results of the study.

If the findings of the study are presented to professional audiences or published, no information that identifies you personally will be released. The data gathered will be stored in locked filed cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. Electronic data will be stored on the investigators computer, which is password protected and

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backed up on an external hard drive that is also password protected. The data will be maintained in a secure manner for 3 years at which time the data will be destroyed.

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study, your parents may contact me at [redacted]@pepperdine.edu or by mail at [redacted]. If you have further questions or do not feel I have adequately addressed your concerns, please contact, Dr. Robert Barner at [redacted]@pepperdine.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Dr. YuYing Tsong, Interim Chairperson of the Institutional Review Board, and Pepperdine University at (310) 568-5768 or [redacted]@pepperdine.edu. I thank you very much for your time and participation.

Please sign below if you agree with this statement:

*I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## APPENDIX H

## Student Perceptions Survey

## Instructions

On the next page are 32 statements describing teacher behaviors, moods, and feelings. Please read each statement carefully then select a number to indicate how strongly you disagree or agree with the statement as it applies to your teacher in the class you are currently in. This is not a test (there are no right or wrong answers). Please be honest. No one in your school, including your teacher or the principal, will see your responses. Do not write your name on your survey. Your responses will not affect your teacher's evaluation at all.

The rating scale provides five choices:

- (1) If you STRONGLY DISAGREE with what is described
- (2) If you DISAGREE of what is described
- (3) If you are UNDECIDED about what is described
- (4) If you AGREE with what is described
- (5) If you STRONGLY AGREE with what is described

*Please respond to every statement.* If you can't respond to a statement (or feel that it doesn't apply), circle a 3 for UNDECIDED. When you have responded to all statements, please return the survey to the person who passed it out to the class.

**PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS SURVEY.**



### Student Perceptions Survey

Instructions: Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by clearly circling the appropriate box.

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I believe my teacher treats me fairly in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I believe my teacher treats me fairly when giving grades.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I believe my teacher is fair when asking questions.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I believe I receive a fair response when asking questions.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My teacher interacts with me regularly.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My teacher always makes me feel welcomed.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am always able to ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I believe my teacher is fair.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I believe my teacher teaches some students more than others in class.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I believe my teacher ignores me.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I don't feel comfortable to speak in class.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My teacher does things that make me feel uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I believe my teacher treats some students unfairly.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I believe my teacher helps me when I have problems.	1	2	3	4	5
15. My teacher's attitudes	1	2	3	4	5

affect my academic performance.					
16. I believe my teacher cares about my success.	1	2	3	4	5
17. My teacher shows me that he or she has confidence in me.	1	2	3	4	5
18. My teacher believes in me.	1	2	3	4	5
19. My teacher makes sure I understand the lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
20. My teacher praises or recognizes me when I do well.	1	2	3	4	5
21. My teacher does not allow other students to mistreat me.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My teacher is someone I can trust.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I believe my teacher is caring.	1	2	3	4	5
24. My teacher listens when I have a concern.	1	2	3	4	5
25. My teacher is pleasant.	1	2	3	4	5
26. My teacher is angry or hostile.	1	2	3	4	5
27. My teacher treats all students the same.	1	2	3	4	5
28. My teacher embarrasses students.	1	2	3	4	5
29. My teacher takes his or her emotions out on students.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I like my teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
31. My teacher seems to like being a teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I believe my teacher likes me.	1	2	3	4	5

What grade are you in?    9<sup>th</sup>                      10<sup>th</sup>                      11<sup>th</sup>                      12<sup>th</sup>

What is your gender?    Male                      Female